USA $12.99 Europe €9.95 UK £8.30 2013#4 www.newinchess.com

NEW IN CHESS

Kamsky and Krush
New U.S. Champions

Norway Chess
A Dream Come True

Aronian Wins
Alekhine Memorial

Veselin Topalov

‘My ambition is not to be among the top 3 or 4, but to fight for more’

ISBN 978-90-5691-411-0

CARLOS TORRE
THE MYSTERY MAN

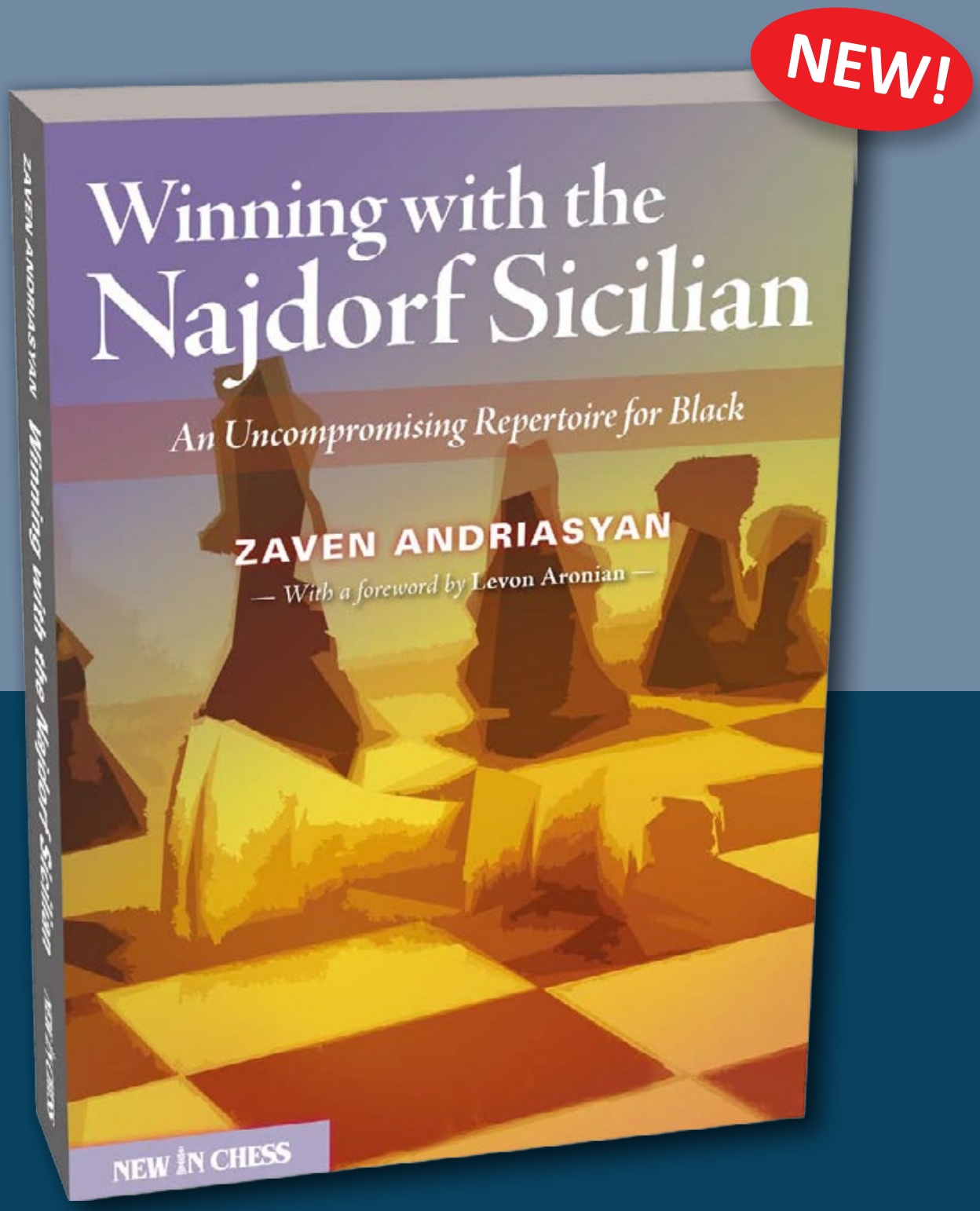
★

ANISH GIRI ON
ZUG GRAND PRIX

★

JUST CHECKING
JON LUDVIG HAMMER

A complete, surprising and punchy repertoire!

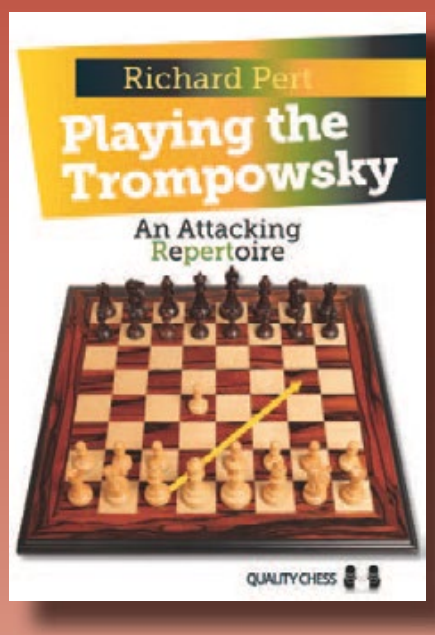


Revisiting all major Najdorf battlegrounds, Armenian GM Zaven Andriasyan challenges accepted views and sheds new light on this great opening. In his search for new paths he has found a great number of radical improvements.

Paperback ♦ 240 pages ♦ € 24.95 ♦ available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com ♦ a NEW IN CHESS publication

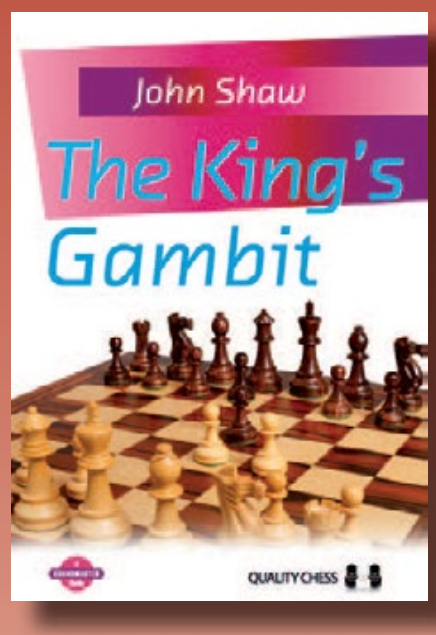
“You can quote me on this forever – QUALITY CHESS is the best chess publisher.” Boris Gelfand

THREE NEW TITLES OUT IN JUNE

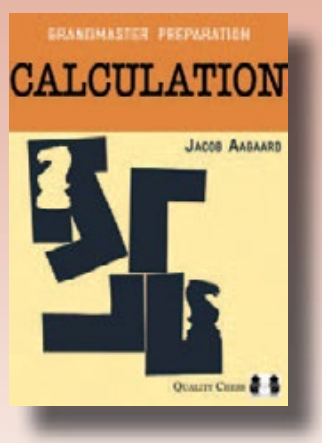


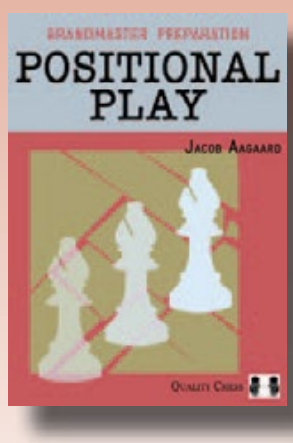
IM Richard Pert supplies an attacking repertoire for White with the Trompowsky.

Renowned opening expert GM Vassilios Kotronias provides Black with full coverage against the popular g3-system of the King’s Indian.

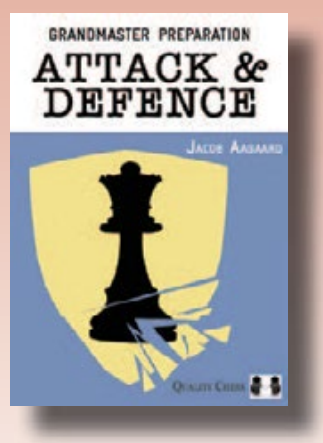


GM John Shaw shows that the ultimate Romantic chess opening remains relevant and dangerous even in the computer era.





Now also available in paperback: the first three volumes of GM Jacob Aagaard’s award-winning Grandmaster Preparation series: **Calculation**, **Positional Play** & **Strategic Play**



Coming soon in hardcover: **Attack and Defence**

Quality Chess books are available from

QUALITYCHESS.COM

www.newinchess.com and other specialist chess retailers

2013 Issue 4

NEW IN CHESS

PUBLISHER: Allard Hoogland EDITORS-IN-CHIEF: Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam, Jan Timman

6 NIC's Café

8 Your Move

10 A Fine Art

12 Karjakin Stays in Control
National hero Magnus Carlsen was the odds-on favourite in the first super-tournament on Norwegian soil, but it was another prodigy born in 1990 that called the shots. Sergey Karjakin won his first four games and stayed in the lead till the very last day of Norway Chess 2013.

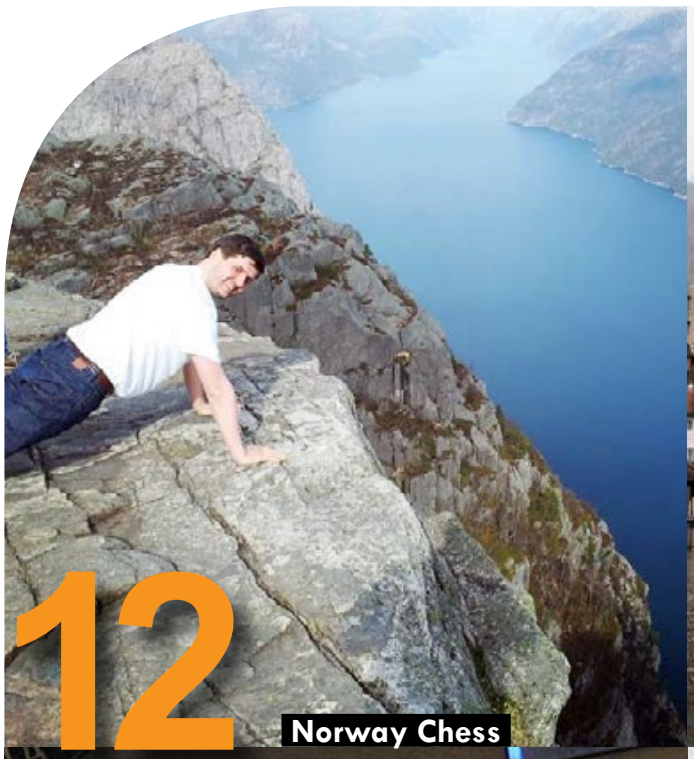
28 Short Stories
Nigel Short muses on an exhilarating month of clubbing.

30 Clear Winner in Zug GP
Contributing editor Anish Giri travelled to Switzerland, where he tried hard to win a game and saw Veselin Topalov continue his inspired comeback.

47 Beware: Brilliancy!

48 Interview: Veselin Topalov
'The Grand Prix was a big mistake. Not because it's a bad idea, but because FIDE simply announced it without any bank guarantees.'

56 Aronian Wins Tale of Two Cities
Russian billionaire Andrei Filatov and his business partner and multi-billionaire Gennady Timchenko reiterated their belief in the happy marriage of chess and art with a grand Alekhine Memorial in Paris and St. Petersburg.



'For some reason in the history of chess, champions were given too many rights. I think Magnus is right in this respect. And it was wrong. It is obvious that the situation we have is correct. The international chess federation decides where is the world championship and who is the World Champion. It's not journalists or the very champion who decide that, as it was in the past.' – Veselin Topalov

SUBSCRIPTIONS p.88

80 The Mystery Man
What happened to Carlos Torre Repetto, Mexico's greatest ever chess player, whose talent glowed like a meteor for one miraculous year?

90 K-Factor Triumphs in St. Louis
Gata Kamsky and Irina Krush emerged as the new U.S. Champions.

102 Triple A Locations
Thinking about chess venues proved to be a memory generator for Hans Ree.

106 Just Checking
Who's Jon Ludvig Hammer's favourite chess player of all time?

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE
Michael Adams, Yochanan Afek, Simen Agdestein, Levon Aronian, Adam Feinstein, Laurent Fressinet, Boris Gelfand, Anish Giri, Jon Ludvig Hammer, Sergey Karjakin, Irina Krush, Ding Liren, Macauley Peterson, Hans Ree, Nigel Short, Jan Timman, Veselin Topalov

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
Boris Dolmatovsky, Harald Einarsen, Calle Erlandsson, Anastasiya Karlovich, Collection David DeLucia, Collection Daniel DeMol, Arvid Nesse, Macauley Peterson

COVER PHOTO
Veselin Topalov: New In Chess

COLOPHON

PUBLISHER: Allard Hoogland
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF:
Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam, Jan Timman
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Anish Giri
EDITORS: Peter Boel, René Olthof
ART-DIRECTION: Jan Scholtus
PRODUCTION: Joop de Groot
TRANSLATORS:
Sarah Hurst, Ken Neat, Piet Verhagen
SALES AND ADVERTISING: Remmelt Otten

© No part of this magazine may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

NEW IN CHESS
P.O. BOX 1093
1810 KB ALKMAAR
THE NETHERLANDS

PHONE: 00-31-(0)72-51 27 137
FAX: 00-31-(0)72-51 58 234
E-MAIL:
SUBSCRIPTIONS: nic@newinchess.com
EDITORS: editors@newinchess.com
SALES AND ADVERTISING:
otten@newinchess.com

BANK DETAILS:
IBAN: NL41ABNA 0589126024
BIC: ABNANL2A in favour of Interchess BV, Alkmaar, The Netherlands

WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

Keeping Up with the Spielbergs

What do the following people have in common? U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden, singer-actor Justin Timberlake, late-night comedian Jimmy Fallon, musician Frank Ocean, film director Steven Spielberg, actor Daniel Day-Lewis, *Breaking Bad* star Bryan Cranston, *Huffington Post* founder Arianna Huffington, Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer and Magnus Carlsen? They (and indeed for practical reasons we're skipping a long list of luminaries) all featured in *Time Magazine*'s 2013 list of 'the 100 most influential people in the world'. And they were all present at the Time 100 Gala in Lincoln Center, New York, to enjoy each other's company, listen to speeches and hear Christina Aguilera (another star on the list) perform.

Magnus Carlsen meets Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer at the Time 100 gala.

Magnus Carlsen is no longer a stranger to fame, but even for him this was a moment to cherish. In the special edition of *Time* his profile was written by Garry Kasparov, who concluded: 'Carlsen is as charismatic and independent as he is talented. If he can rekindle the world's fascination with the royal game, we will soon be living in the Carlsen era.'

Apparently the *Time* editors also appreciate the Norwegian's wit. They happily quoted his 'I'm not a genius', which they suggest as the first sentence of his hypothetical autobiography.

Fame, Fame, Fame

A fine selection of exclusively chess players was honoured at the outset of the 2013 U.S. Championships in St. Louis. The ceremony took place across the street of the Chess Club and Scholastic Center, where the World's Largest Chess Piece marks the entrance to the World Chess Hall of Fame.

Elizaveta Bykova vs men.

Three players were inducted into the Hall: Elizaveta Bykova, Nona Gaprindashvili and Mikhail Chigorin. Bykova was four-time Women's World Champion in the 50s and 60s, and earned the IM title. Former Women's World Champion Gaprindashvili was the first woman to be awarded the GM title.

Mikhail Chigorin was a top Russian Master around the turn of the 20th century, with many fine performances in international tournaments, including second place at Hastings 1895.

The U.S. Chess Hall of Fame also welcomed two new inductees: Gregory Kaidanov and Mona May Karff. Kaidanov played for the winning U.S. team at the 1993 World Team Championship and this year participated in his 18th U.S. Championship.

Gregory Kaidanov: GM and prolific trainer.

Mona May Karff was a seven-time U.S. Women's Champion (the first time in 1934, the last time in 1974 at age 66!) and World Championship candidate.

Drawing Inspiration

The three-move draw between Pavel Eljanov and Wesley So at the Reykjavik Open last February led to a lively debate about short fightless last-round draws, and we remain grateful to Eljanov that he was willing to share his views afterwards in our previous issue.

Little did we know that this ultra-brief game could also be an inspiration! In the last round of the Thailand Open even two games lasted for only four moves. First there was the battle between Australian GM Zhao Zhong-Yuan and Chinese IM Wan Yunguo, in which, after the moves 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4, the players discovered that they had ended up in a typical King's Indian draw. As it turned out, Zhao Zhong-Yuan secured sole first place with this draw, but Wan Yunguo gave up his own chances to fight for first place, apparently happy with the first GM norm that the draw yielded him.

The other four-move draw occurred in the clash between GMs Sune Berg Hansen and Jan Gustafsson, who suddenly noticed that after 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.♗g2 there is really very little to fight for. With this draw they both declined to try and catch Zhao Zhong-Yuan. Gustafsson made it clear that he had not come to Thailand for the prize-fund when he laconically admitted that he was 'just on holiday'. As Frank Ocean (Time 100!) puts it on his wonderful debut album *Orange*: 'Why see the world, when you got the beach.'

Worthy Conclusion

All games were hard-fought in the last round of the 21st Sigeman tournament in Malmö. Two games were drawn after 43 and 68 moves respec-

tively, while in the other games two ambitious youngsters grabbed their last chance to jump to shared first place. Hungary's Richard Rapport defeated Jonny Hector, and local favourite Nils Grandelius beat Ivan Sokolov. With these wins Grandelius and Rapport caught up with Nigel Short to share first place.

CALLE ERLANDSSON

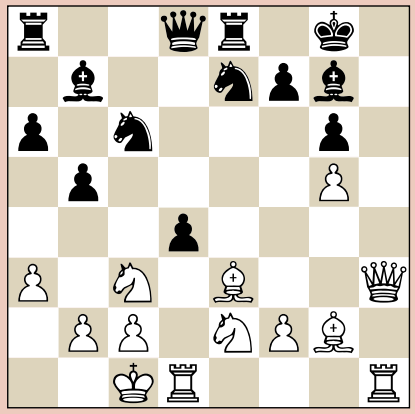
Sweden's Nils Grandelius was one of the winners in Malmö.

To our taste three winners is a bit much for a tournament of eight players (after all, only five didn't win) and hopefully the organizers will find a way to have one winner in the next edition, but for the rest this was a worthy conclusion to a tournament with a rich history.

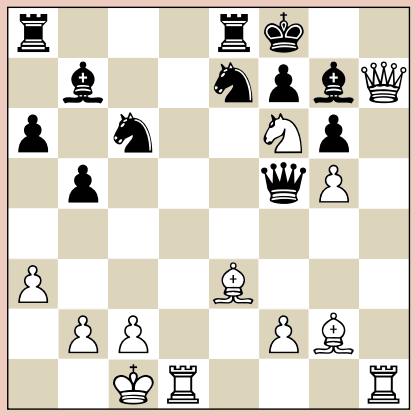
One of the liveliest games was won by our respected columnist.

SI 41.9 – B43
Nigel Short
Loek van Wely
Malmö 2013 (5)

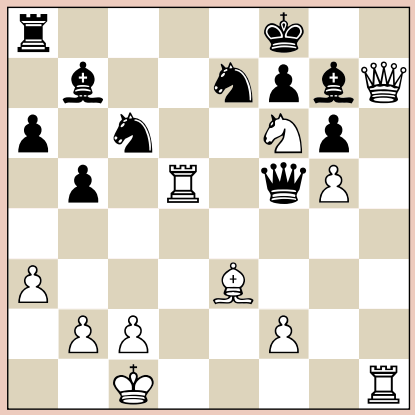
1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 a6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 d6 6.g4 ♘e7 7.h4 b5 8.♗g2 ♗b7 9.g5 ♘bc6 10.a3 g6 In an original Sicilian position both players show their ambitions. **11.h5 ♗g7 12.♘de2 0-0** Now 13. h6 doesn't really worry Black. **13. hxg6 hxg6 14.♕d3 ♖e8 15.♕h3 d5** Black tries to ward off White's imminent kingside attack, but this push looks risky. **16.exd5 exd5 17.♗e3 d4 18.0-0-0**



This looks very pleasant for White. **18...dxc3** Not too wild about 18...♘f5 19.♘e4, Van Wely decides on a queen sacrifice. **19.♘xc3!?** Rather than taking the queen with 19.♖xd8, which looks good for White after 19...cxb2+ 20.♔b1 ♖axd8, and now either 21.c3 or 21.♗c5, Short reciprocates with a creative piece sac. **19...♕c8 20.♕h7+ ♔f8 21.♘e4 ♕f5?** After 21...♘e5 Black would have been OK. **22.♘f6!**



22...♖ed8 23.♗d5 As the knight on e7 has to defend g8. **23...♖xd5 24. ♖xd5**



24...♕f3? He should have tried 24...♕xd5 25.♘xd5 ♘xd5 26.♗c5+ ♘ce7 27.♖e1, when White would still have to think a bit. **25.♘d7+ ♔e8 26.♖dd1 ♘f5 27.♘f6+ ♔e7 28.♗c5+ ♔e6 29.♖he1+ ♘e5 30.♕h2 ♗xf6 31.gxf6 ♗e4 32. ♗d4! ♘c6 33.♗c3 ♖c8 34.♖d3 ♕g4 35.f3 ♕g5+ 36.♔b1** 1-0.

What's Old?

It has been around for a while, but it is only recently that our attention was drawn to the website Old In Chess. The person or people behind Old In Chess may know of our existence, but that's where the connection ends. Old In Chess aims to bring 'The latest chess news from 100 years ago'. The oldest posts refer to 1907 ('Dr. Tarrasch has written a book on the Championship Tournament held at Ostend in May and June of this year. A copy of that work is now to hand, having arrived yesterday by steamer from Europe. It is a handsome volume, and the good doctor annotates all sixty games played with his usual sharp eye and equally sharp pen.' Etc.), but it's only in recent months that the posts have started to appear on a daily basis, reporting on chess events that took place exactly one hundred years ago. There is a lot of fascinating stuff culled from contemporary sources like newspapers and magazines, and once you start reading it's hard to stop. There is a lot going on in 1913, but we can't wait to follow the news in 1914, with great historical tournaments in St. Petersburg and Mannheim coming up! ■

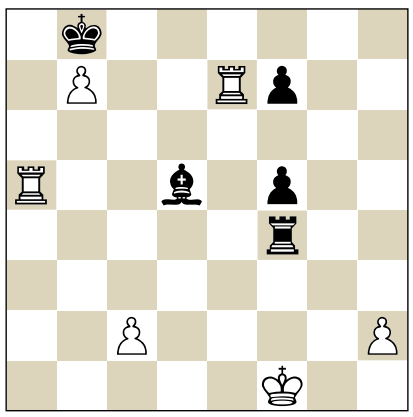
Dr. Tarrasch: A sharp eye and a sharp pen.

Your Move

Monaco 1967

I really like your magazine, especially the historical reports and photos are mostly excellent. In New In Chess 2013/3 Jimmy Adams gives us his view of the great old days in Monte Carlo and mentions in one of his anecdotes that the great Bobby Fischer gave a wrong analysis of a variation in his game against Bisguier, New York 1963, in his *My 60 Memorable Games*.

But not only the great Bobby could go wrong. Right in his next game, Adams-Durao, the author shows that he is not perfect in giving the right analysis of his own games. In the last variation of the game he gives the comment:



Adams-Durao
position after 38...♖xf4+

'The game is not over yet. My opponent had hoped I would try to escape the checks by 39.♔g2 ♖g4+ 40 ♔h3, when he would deliver the telling blow 40... ♗g2 mate!'

So the bullet-proof white king, which is able to cross the g2-square under check, is finally mortal!

Maybe a little oversight that went undiscovered for 45 years, and another nice anecdote to write about?!

Axel Herms
Rüdesheim am Rhein, Germany

First impressions

I was happy to read your article in New In Chess 2013/3 about Daniel Weil's new chess set design. As an artist myself, I am a student of form and design... not to mention colour.

I have some feedback concerning the 'look' of Weil's design: It looks overly designed, actually it looks computer-generated! This is a common occurrence in design in our time of digital technology, and something we as artists and designers find difficult if not impossible to eliminate from the work.

As for the use of the Parthenon, i.e. classical antiquity, for the chess set's appearance, I don't find it convincing: other than the eight columns and the eight chess pieces in a row, there is no significant relationship. Greek columns are marble columns and chess pieces are wooden board pieces, and I fail to see more than a casual relationship when they are lined up. Also, if Weil's intention was to make his set 'pluricultural and global' as you mentioned, then he might stay well away from Greek design and architecture, which is easily argued as mono-cultural, and anything but global, both during its reign some 2,000 years ago and today! I think a good chess set evokes a kind of sensuality in the design and the material, and I think we as players notice these nuances. That is why Gelfand's comment is the true test of this design: 'At first the pieces look strange...' Often first impressions are correct!

Gregory Odle
California, USA

Write to us
New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093
1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands
or e-mail: editors@newinchess.com
Letters may be edited or abridged

Pedantic

It saddens me each time I hear someone complaining about some missed variation or some (pedantic) fact in the Letters section.

So I thought I should drop in a word saying how much I enjoy your magazine. I don't play chess anymore, yet derive immense pleasure out of New In Chess. The interviews with top players or just their thoughts in the middle of a tournament report are fascinating.

I also love some of the photographs. For example, Kasparov looking over at the Russian team playing at the Olympiad. The interest, the concern and the involvement. Just fantastic !

You guys are doing a great job with this fabulous magazine.

Hans Sartaj
Potts Point, Australia

Misleading and unjustified

I was rather surprised to see your severely misleading and unjustified personal attack on myself in NIC's Café – a severe contrast to Pavel Eljanov's considered, although critical, comments about me in the same issue (New In Chess 2013/3).

Although I was not in Bilbao (as you, equally, were not in Sao Paulo) we both watched exactly the same last round post-game press conference – you in person, myself via the internet. You very selectively quoted Caruana to make your case, omitting the key parts where Caruana said: 'I was actually looking before the game not how to win but first how to get a normal position. Of course after I choose this opening, the Zaitsev, I don't really have chances to avoid it if White wants to make a draw.'

What's baffling is that an experienced chess journalist like you can interpret these words – and more importantly Caruana's choice of the Zaitsev Variation and failure to try to avoid the repetition (as GMs such as Karpov have done in the past when they were keen to win) – in any other manner than offering his opponent the chance to make a short draw if he wished.

The real problem here is that you created a narrative about the tournament which required Caruana to be lauded as a great fighting player and Vallejo to be heavily criticised for making the repetition. It would ruin the narrative to say that, although both Vallejo and Caruana are fighting players, they decided on that day that, if their opponent was so inclined, the game would end in a quick draw.

Unfortunately, when you were called

out on your spin, you doubled down and resorted to selective quotes from Caruana to defend yourself and attack others, including the defamatory claim that I have deliberately misled readers. These are actions and statements not worthy of an editor of New In Chess.

Ian Rogers
Sydney, Australia

PS Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam:
What you see as 'a severely misleading and unjustified personal attack' was nothing more than a factual reply to what you wrote in *Chess Life* when a reader pointed out the difference between your version in CL of what happened in the last round in Bilbao and mine in New In Chess. You say that the 'real problem' is that I 'created a narrative which required Caruana to be lauded as a great fighting player'. What can I say? Based on the evidence that I offered that is certainly a more logical narrative than the one you present, of a generous Caruana allowing his suffering opponent Vallejo a short draw. In your narrative you forget to explain why Caruana, famous for his fighting spirit, wilfully gave up his chances to fight for probably the biggest success in his career. Furthermore, the draw not only condemned him to a play-off against Magnus Carlsen in which (as Caruana told me) he believed he stood no chance, but also cost him literally tens of thousands of euros (the difference between first and second prize). A truly noble gesture towards Vallejo, indeed. But it leaves the question on what evidence you base your 'narrative'. And why you choose not to believe Caruana.

You state that my story is based on exactly the same press conference that you followed online, but in fact, I barely watched that press conference. I *did*, however, see Caruana cringe and almost fall off his chair when he was asked why *he* had made a draw. My story was not based on a press conference where Caruana tried to remain polite, but on what he said when I spoke to him afterwards – when, with both gestures and words, he made it clear how frustrated he was that he could not have played for a win and that he and his coach had not expected Vallejo to go for this famous move repetition (quite naïve, certainly, I agree, but the fact that they had not considered this possibility was obviously part of his annoyance).

You are upset that I suggest that you wilfully misled readers. Let me stress that I have no doubt whatsoever that this was never your wish when you wrote your report for *Chess Life*. But I am less sure what to think when, in the face of all the evidence I offer, you stubbornly stick to your version, which not only defies logic but is also demonstrably wrong.

Still paying $$$ to play chess??
Play for FREE at Chess.com
Join the world's largest chess community with over
7 million players from all around the world.
All Titled Players (incl. National and FIDE Masters!) get
FREE lifetime Diamond Memberships.
Create Your Free Account at Chess.com and Start Playing Today!
- Live Chess
- Correspondence
- Tournaments
- Team Matches
- Video Library
- Tactics Trainer
- Opening Explorer
- Computer Analysis
- Forums
- News
- Articles
- ChessTV
Chess.com

A Fine Art

A Fine Art

Chess and painting have always been felicitous partners. This ravishing double portrait of William Earle Welby of Denton, Lincolnshire, and his first wife Penelope at a game of chess, was last shown in public at an exhibition at the Royal Academy in London in 1881. One of the earliest depictions of chess in British portraiture, it was painted in 1769 by Francis Cotes, a contemporary and rival of the famous Sir Joshua Reynolds. Cotes was one of the founder-members of the Royal Academy. This is one of his masterpieces and one of the five oils he selected for the Academy's inaugural exhibition in 1769. The painting was presented at the recent European Fine Art Fair in Maastricht by the Matthiesen Gallery of London. Given the interest it attracted, there is little doubt that it was sold. What price it fetched and who bought it we do not know, but as it is most unlikely that it will be publicly displayed any time soon, we thought we should show you the photograph that Patrick Matthiesen kindly provided us with.

For all Norwegian chess enthusiasts, what happened in the Stavanger region these wonderful spring days was almost surreal. The Norwegian coast, which we are so proud of, has seen warmer and sunnier days, but none of this mattered a single bit. We had the finest chess stars in the world shining on us! It wasn't only me who was pinching his arm to tell myself that this was really happening. Sergey Karjakin was pinching his arm too. The young Russian claimed the blitz tournament, won his first four games and stayed in the lead till the very last day of Norway Chess 2013.

Sergey Karjakin in the Stavanger Oil Museum, where, proudly wearing his Norway Chess sweater, he briefly took a seat in the control room of an old oil platform.

Stavanger

Jøran Aulin-Jansson, the president of the Norwegian Chess Federation, responded humorously with a succinct 'Dream on!' when, a year ago, a group of people from the Stavanger region suggested staging the world's strongest tournament in Norway. His doubts were understandable, but hasn't Magnus Carlsen shown us that in Norwegian chess the unthinkable may actually be possible?

The Stavanger region is prospering thanks to oil money, but from that affluence to making people invest in a chess tournament is a long step. Despite all Magnus Carlsen's successes, chess is still very small in Norway. People don't start playing chess simply because Magnus is doing well. In fact, it has been the other way round. The Norwegian Youth Chess Federation has been falling in numbers. And definitely no one has started throwing money at us. Sure, there are great chess events coming up in Tromsø, first the World Cup in August of this year and then the Olympiad next year. But still, the Norwegian chess community is very small and used to meagre conditions. This was a real breakthrough!

First and foremost Kjell Madland, the chairman of Norway Chess,

Sergey Karjakin stays in control after perfect start

Simen Agdestein

Travellers arriving at Stavanger airport could hardly fail to notice the gigantic portrait of Magnus Carlsen in the arrival hall.

NEW IN CHESS

deserves endless praise for an enormous effort. He at least has a chess-playing son, but the group of people he assembled around him knew almost nothing about chess. Apparently, those are the best organizers!

To begin with, a big sales job had to be done. The budget was almost 800,000 euro, and in Norway sponsors don't give away money. They invest. What would they get in return? That wasn't so obvious. However, to everyone's relief, they all seemed happy! Most likely the sponsors want to see the chess stars on Norwegian soil again.

But then collecting money was just one thing. A huge logistic job had to be done. What amazed me was that it actually was the same people that were doing everything! Tables and chairs had to be carried, posters had to be mounted, people had to be transported, the works – and at the heart of all the action were Kjell Madland and the other directors, all of whom had taken (at least!) a couple of weeks off from their regular jobs.

Everything was top-notch. All players had their own Mini Cooper decorated with Norway Chess motifs. There were five different playing venues – the University of Stavanger for the preliminary blitz tournament that served as the drawing of lots, the Quality Hotel Residence in Sandnes for most of the rounds, the Aarbakke Factory, the spectacular flower island Flor & Fjære, and finally the Concert Hall in Stavanger – and they all looked fantastic. At the airport the players were welcomed by life-size portraits of themselves (and a truly gigantic poster of Magnus Carlsen), the town was decorated with Norway Chess posters, the staff had specially designed sweaters, conditions in general were great. All thanks to a small group working very hard behind the scenes and not because of endless funds.

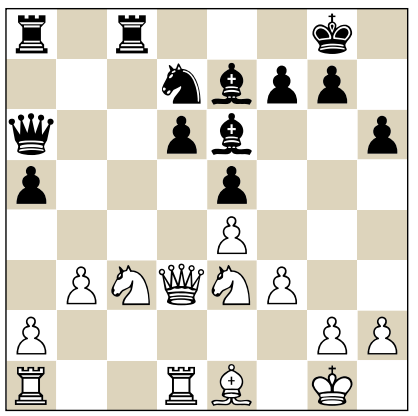
Obviously, Magnus Carlsen was the main attraction for the Norwegian press. He's recognized as one of Norway's biggest athletes ever, and has already been nominated sportsman of the year a few times by the biggest newspapers in Norway. Recently he got chosen among The World's 100 Most Influential People by *TIME Magazine*. There seems to be no end to his fame.

However, we don't see Magnus on Norwegian soil very often. He barely gives interviews to the Norwegian press and has become quite a mystery for many. And that sells! Magnus keeps his shell around him and is a hard interviewee, which is understandable considering the enormous amount of requests he gets.

The organizers realized that handling the press is a job for professionals and had hired Jarle Heitmann, the press officer of the Tromsø 2014 Olympiad. There were lots of stories to feed the press with. The upcoming World Championship match between Magnus Carlsen and Vishy Anand was the most obvious one. The contenders already met in Round 2. After a calm draw in the preliminary blitz tournament Magnus had some chances in the classical game.

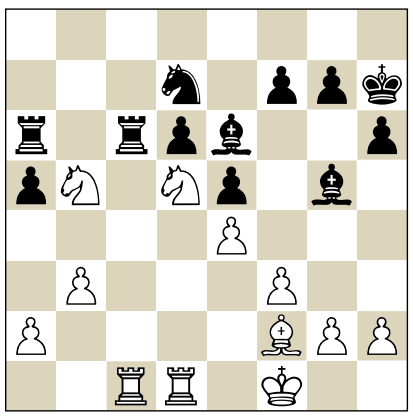
SI 1.4 – B51
Magnus Carlsen
Vishy Anand
Stavanger 2013 (2)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♘d7 4.d4 cxd4 5.♕xd4 a6 6.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 7.c4 e5 8.♕d3 b5 9.♘c3 bxc4 10.♕xc4 ♗e6 11.♕d3 h6 12.0-0 ♘f6 13.♖d1 ♗e7 14.♘e1 0-0 15.♘c2 ♕b6 16.♘e3 ♖fc8 17.b3 a5 18.♗d2 ♕a6 19.♗e1 ♘d7 20.f3



Black has solved his opening problems easily, but here Anand actually made what he himself called a blunder. **20...♖c6? 21.♕xa6 ♖cxa6** This was certainly not the point of the

previous move, but, as Anand pointed out, 21...♖axa6 can be met strongly by 22.b4! axb4 23.♘ed5!. **22.♘ed5 ♗d8 23.♘b5 ♖c8 24.♗f2 ♔h7 25.♔f1 ♖cc6 26.♖ac1 ♗g5**



27.♖c3 Magnus sometimes looks very tired when he plays chess, which is a bit surprising considering his strength. How strong couldn't he have been if he hadn't been so sleepy! Here he missed 27.♖xc6 ♖xc6 28.♘dc7, actually winning a pawn, since the a-pawn will drop after 28...♗e7 29.♗e1. **27...♗xd5 28.♖xd5 ♖xc3 29.♘xc3 ♖c6 30.♗e1 ♘c5 31.♘b5 ♘b7** This was also missed by Magnus. It didn't look so pretty for Black, but the worst was over and Anand actually had no problems holding it. ½-½ after 59 moves.

The players commented on their games before a live audience straight after the games, and these sessions were really interesting! They are still available in the archives on www. norwaychess.com. I was supposed to be the expert commentator in the live Internet broadcast with Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam, the editor of this magazine, in the role of simply knowing everything – which he actually does! Of course, listening to the players themselves explaining their games remains a unique experience.

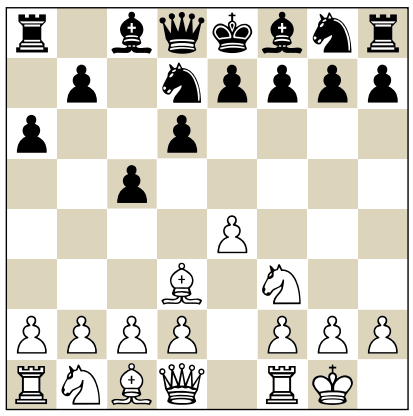
The clash between Magnus Carlsen and Peter Svidler also attracted attention. Svidler has already been to Norway a few times, but now he has become famous for beating Magnus in that dramatic last round in the Candidates' tournament in London.

ARVID NESSE

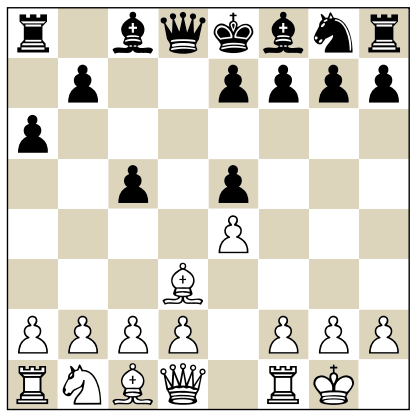
Having walked all the way up with his second Maxim Matlakov, Peter Svidler happily did a few push-ups on Pulpit Rock, where the promotional video for Norway Chess was shot.

SI 1.3 – B51
Magnus Carlsen
Peter Svidler
Stavanger 2013 (4)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ This line has become all the rage lately, but I doubt it will last long. Black's challenges are not that hard. It's basically about just getting a position with less theory. **3...♘d7 4.0-0** Deviating from 4.d4, which Magnus played against Vishy two rounds earlier. **4...a6 5.♗d3**

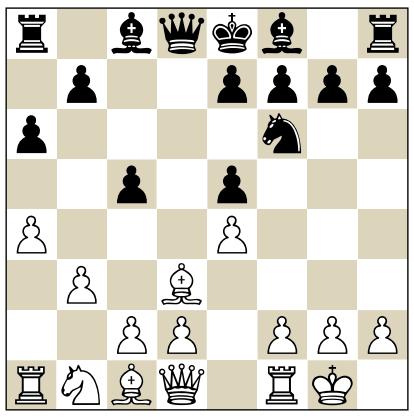


5...♘e5!? We tried to dig out some secrets about the players' preparation before the games and got the impression that most of them preferred simply to relax, since most games would turn out to be long fights anyway and it was better not to waste too much energy. Svidler, however, seemed a little different by focusing more on the chess part with concrete opening lines almost right up till the games started. Only against Vassily Ivanchuk did he not prepare at all, since the Ukrainian is totally unpredictable anyway. 5...♘e5 seemed like an idea that they had come up with just right before the game, but one that he certainly didn't want to repeat. **6.♘xe5 dxe5**

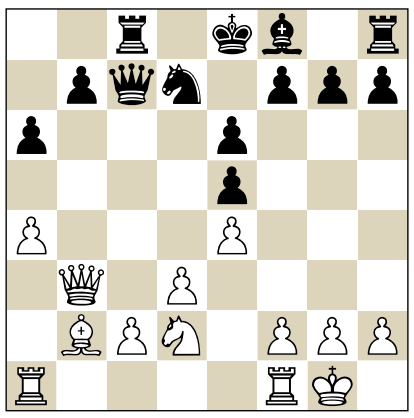


7.a4! This is very natural, but now actually Svidler had a long think. His planned setup with sending a knight to c6 suddenly didn't seem so attractive. Both players agreed that 7...e6 8.♘a3 ♘e7 9.♘c4 ♘c6 10.a5 looked horrible

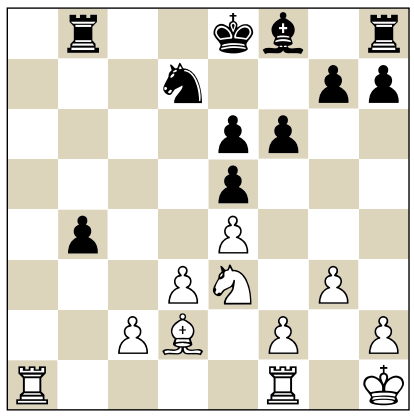
for Black, but I'm actually not so sure. After 10...♗d6 and putting the bishop on c7 it may not be so bad. White doesn't have time to protect the a5-pawn with b3, ♗b2-c3. **7...♘f6 8.b3**



8...♗e6!? Very creative, and as we know now, over-the-board improvisation, but it looks suspect. **9.♗b2** Magnus of course saw Black's next move, but foresaw a huge advantage in development. **9...♗xb3 10.♕e2 c4** Most players would die quickly against the world's number one in such a position, but Svidler impressively manages to stay alive. **11.♗xc4 ♗xc4 12.♕xc4 ♖c8 13.♕b3 ♕c7 14. d3 e6** Taking on c2 is a bit too much. Black still has a long way to go to complete his development. **15.♘d2** Now taking on c2 can be met with a rook to c1. **15...♘d7**



16.♘c4? After the game Magnus said that he had intended to play the obvious 15.a5 instantly, but suddenly hesitated and then thought he should be 'clever'. **16...b6!** Svidler seizes his chance and actually solves all his problems with this. **17.♔h1** Black still needs to be precise, since lifting the bishop would be answered with f2-f4. But Black has time to play ...b6-b5 first and the crisis is over. **17... ♖b8 18.♕c3 f6 19.g3 b5 20.axb5 axb5 21.♘e3 ♕xc3 22.♗xc3 b4 23.♗d2**



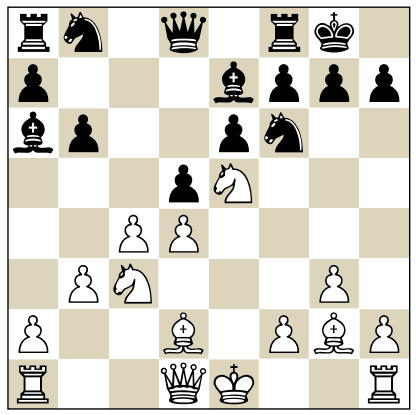
23...b3! Svidler is precise to the last. **24.cxb3 ♖xb3 25.♖a8+ ♖b8 26. ♖xb8+ ♘xb8 27.♖c1 ♔d7 28.♖b1 ♘c6 29.♘c4 ♗e7** And it was soon a draw.

> "Sergey Karjakin was one big smile and kept on saying, "So far so good!""

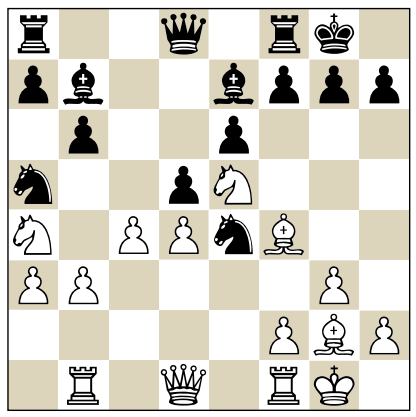
After these clashes and a rather sleepy start by Magnus with four draws as a result, the attention for the local favourite dropped a bit. But for the insiders Sergey Karjakin was about to create a sensation. Karjakin was just one big smile and after each of his four consecutive wins in the first four rounds he kept on saying 'So far, so good!' No wonder that he was happy after beating the world's number two in the following way:

QI 16.9 – E15
Levon Aronian
Sergey Karjakin
Stavanger 2013 (4)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♗a6 5.b3 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2 ♗e7 7. ♘c3 0-0 8.♗g2 c6 9.e4 This line is under debate these days with Karjakin very much involved. **9...d5 10.exd5 cxd5 11.♘e5**

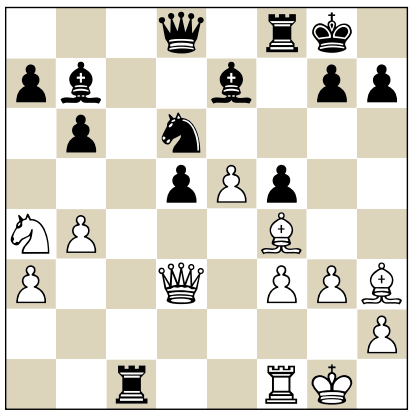


11...♗b7 In Sao Paulo/Bilbao last autumn, in a game between the same players, Aronian got an advantage after 11...♘fd7 12.0-0 ♘xe5 13.dxe5 ♘d7 14.♖e1 dxc4 15.♗xa8 ♕xa8 16. ♗h6 ♖d8 17.♕g4 ♗f8 18.♖ad1 ♘c5 19.bxc4, and won convincingly. Of course, Karjakin in the meantime had studied the line carefully. **12.0-0 ♘c6 13.♗f4 ♘a5 14.♖c1 ♗a3 15.♖b1 ♗b4 16.♘a4 ♘e4 17.a3** The bishop will be trapped after 17...♗xa3 18. b4 or 18.cxd5 first. **17...♗e7** All this manoeuvring with the bishop seems a bit strange, but just the same happened in Hammer-Karjakin in the second round. Hammer tried 18.♕d3 f6 19.♘g4 ♖e8 20.cxd5 exd5 21.f3 ♘d6 22.♖fc1 ♗f8 23.♘e3 ♘f7 24.b4 ♘c6 and was suddenly worse after 25.b5? ♘ce5! 26.dxe5 fxe5 27.♗xe5 ♘xe5. It's a credit for Hammer that Aronian actually followed him so far. The 'improvement' is not that dramatic.

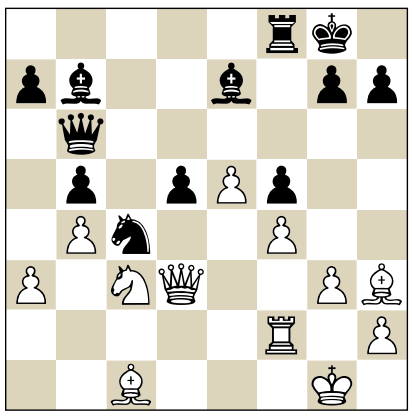


18.cxd5 exd5 19.b4 ♘c6 20.♖c1 ♖c8 21.♗h3 f5 At first glance it seems as if White has something here

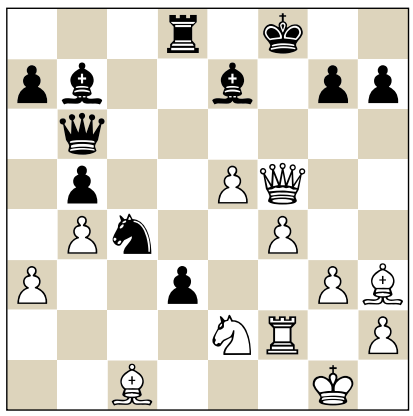
with the hole on e5, but Karjakin didn't seem to worry. **22.f3 ♘d6 23.♕d3** 23.♘xc6 was better, according to Karjakin. **23...♘xe5 24.dxe5 ♖xc1**



25.♗xc1 25.♖xc1 ♘c4 26.♗xf5 is a critical line. Karjakin showed a long variation starting with 26...g5 27.♗xh7+ ♔h8 28.♕g6 gxf4 29.♕h5 ♔g7 and many more moves if White were to try to play for a win. But in fact he had overlooked 29.♗g8!, winning right away. Aronian simply mentioned 26...♗g5, which is much stronger. **25...♘c4 26.f4** I base my comments on Karjakin's remarks after the game. He thought Aronian must have had a bad day. 26.♖e1, to keep the long diagonal shut, is much safer. **26...b5 27.♘c3** And here 27.♘b2 was necessary. **27...♕b6+ 28.♖f2**



28...d4! It's not only a tremendous diagonal that is being opened. The passed pawn is also very strong. **29.♘e2 ♖d8 30.♕xf5** Both 30.♗xf5 ♕c6 and 30.♗g2 ♗e4 31.♗xe4 fxe4 32.♕xe4 d3 lose for White. **30...d3 31.♕e6+ ♔f8** Karjakin wanted to have his king closer to the centre after 32.♕xb6 axb6 33.♘c3 d2, but White should have tried this anyway. **32.♕f5+**

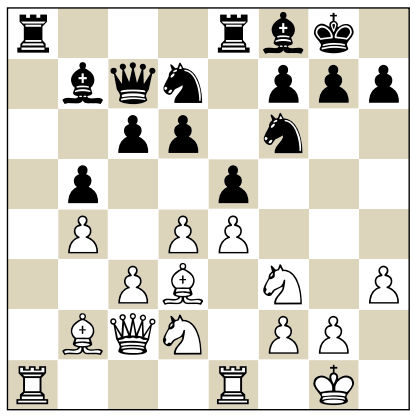


32...♔e8! After a long think. The main thing to find here is 33.e6 ♖d6! and 34.♕f7+ ♔d8 35.♕g8+ ♔c7 36.♕xg7 dxe2 37.♕xe7+ ♔b8 is resignable. **33.♕xh7 d2 34.♗xd2 ♖xd2 35.e6** There is no defence anyway. **35...♖d1+ 36.♗f1 ♕xe6 37.♕h5+ ♔f8 38.♘c3 ♕c6** White resigned.

However, in Round 5 Carlsen brought back the tension by beating Karjakin. It didn't look too good for the Norwegian after the opening.

RL 25.10 – C95
Sergey Karjakin
Magnus Carlsen
Stavanger 2013 (5)

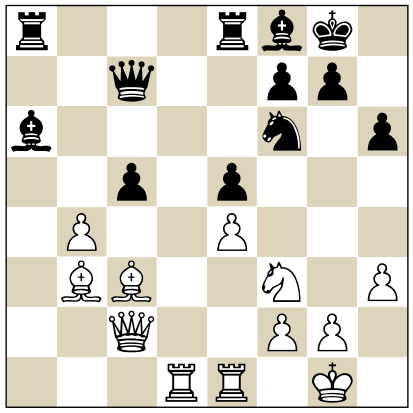
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♘b8 10.d4 ♘bd7 11.♘bd2 ♗b7 12.♗c2 ♖e8 13.a4 ♗f8 14.♗d3 c6 15.♕c2 ♖c8 16.axb5 axb5 17.b4 ♕c7 18.♗b2 ♖a8 We were a bit surprised by Carlsen's opening choice. It seemed to be a 'must win-situation' for Carlsen if he wanted to come within striking distance of Karjakin, who at this point was two full points ahead of him. But there is not so much to play for in this line. With all the tension in the centre still there, the game can take different paths, but the common feature is that these positions are easy to play for White and Karjakin of course knows what he's doing.



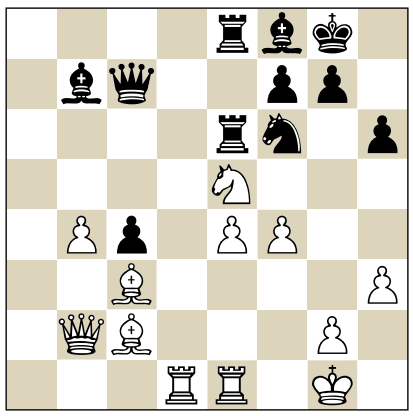
19.♖ad1! The main focus here is the centre. **19...♘b6 20.c4 bxc4 21.♘xc4 ♘xc4 22.♗xc4 h6** With the

Who wouldn't like to speed through a Norwegian fjord? Sitting in pole position, Levon Aronian certainly enjoyed the experience.

queen unprotected on c7 there are no tricks with ...d6-d5. **23.dxe5!** Simple and good. **dxe5 24.♗c3 ♗a6 25.♗b3 c5**



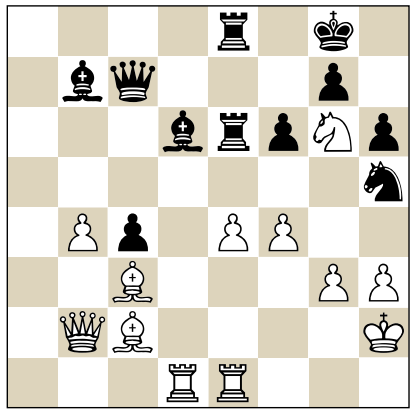
26.♕b2 After winning four games in a row Karjakin must have been full of confidence and perhaps he got a bit carried away. Carlsen pointed out 26.bxc5 ♕xc5 27.♕b2, and he thought he might have had to struggle for a draw after 27...♗c4 28.♗xc4 ♕xc4 29.♘xe5 ♕a2. **26...c4 27.♗a4 ♖e6 28.♘xe5** This, of course, also seemed very strong for White. **28...♗b7 29.♗c2** As both Carlsen and the computers point out, 29.♗b5 looks like a huge white advantage. **29...♖ae8 30.f4**



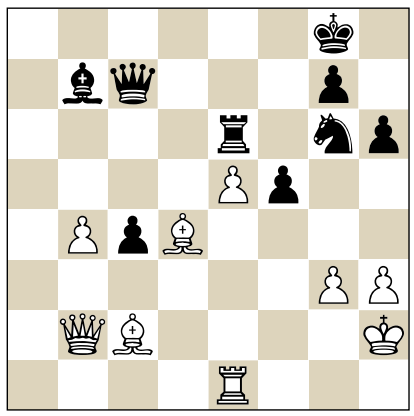
30...♗d6! Now it's not so clear. **31.♔h2** Putting the king on this diagonal is not the most obvious decision. Actually, White has to be very precise already to maintain the balance. **31...♘h5 32.g3 f6 33.♘g6** 33.♖xd6 ♖xd6 34.♘xc4 was pointed out by some of the other players, but White is still in trouble after 34...♖c6 35.♗b3 ♔h8, since 36.♕e2 can be met strongly by 36...♘xf4!.

NEW IN CHESS

Magnus Carlsen fully agreed that Sergey Karjakin was the deserved winner of Norway Chess 2013.



33...♘xf4! Perhaps Karjakin had overlooked this a few moves ago. **34.♖xd6** 34.gxf4 ♗xf4+ is just a decisive mating attack. **34...♘xg6 35.♖xe6 ♖xe6** Magnus has regained the pawn and is clearly better. **36.♗d4 f5 37.e5**



37...♘xe5! A little trick. **38.♗xe5** 38.♖xe5 ♖xe5 39.♗xe5 ♕c6 is mate.

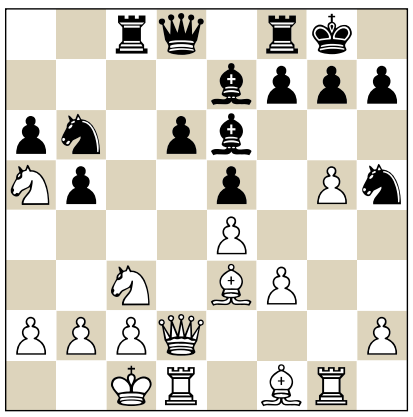
38...♕c6 39.♖g1 The last chance was 39.♗e4 fxe4 40.♖e3. **39...♕d5 40.♗xf5 ♖xe5 41.♗g4 h5** White is helpless here with his exposed king. **42.♗d1 c3 43.♕f2 ♖f5 44.♕e3 ♕f7 45.g4 ♖e5 46.♕d4 ♕c7** White resigned. After 47.♕f4 ♖e2+ 48.♔g3 h4+ wins the queen.

The World Champion wouldn't listen to any talk about getting old, but I wasn't quite convinced when he said he spent more time on the clock now because 'there is more to think about'. For those who remember Anand beating very strong grandmasters at blitz speed in his younger days, he seems more like the others now. The results are a bit up and down. In Norway Chess he even lost two games. However, Carlsen will of course never believe it will be an easy walk to the World Champion title. Against Topalov we saw the World Champion at his best.

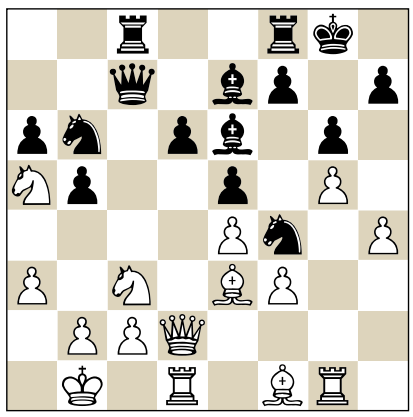
SI 14.8 – B90
Vishy Anand
Veselin Topalov
Stavanger 2013 (3)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e3 e5

7.♘b3 ♗e6 8.f3 ♗e7 9.♕d2 0-0 10.0-0-0 ♘bd7 11.g4 b5 12.♖g1 ♘b6 13.♘a5 ♖c8 14.g5 ♘h5

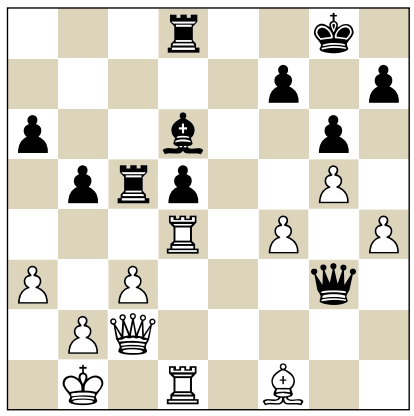


We deliberately avoided the assistance of engines during our commentating. That must have affected the accuracy somewhat, of course, but it gave us a chance to look at positions with an open mind. But at first glance the knights in this game are funny. Despite castling in different directions no one seems to be going to be mated here. The debate here is whose knight on the rim can be used for something? **15.♔b1 ♘f4** A slight surprise for us novices in the position. But then we saw that after taking twice on f4, Black has ...♘a4 at the end, and White is in big trouble. **16.a3 g6 17.h4 ♕c7**

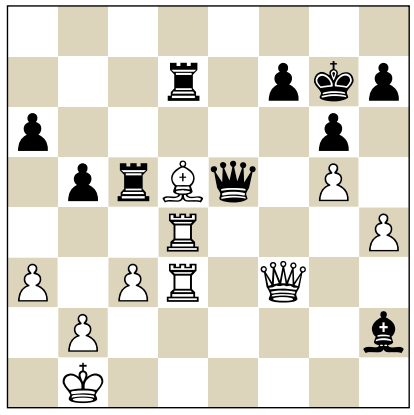


18.♗xf4 Finally! **18...exf4 19.♘d5** Still 19.♕xf4 ♘a4 was great for Black. **19...♗xd5 20.exd5 ♘xd5 21.♕xd5 ♕xa5** Suddenly all the knights were gone! After this game the conclusion seems to be that White has better chances on the light squares than Black has counterplay on the dark squares. **22.♖g4 ♖c5 23.♕b3 d5 24.♖xf4 ♕c7 25.♖fd4 ♕h2** Creating counterplay on the kingside is absolutely necessary. **26.c3 ♖d8 27.♕c2 ♕g3 28.f4 ♗d6**

Vishy Anand's play continued to be a bit up and down. Hikaru Nakamura brilliantly used the chance the World Champion offered him to score a memorable win.



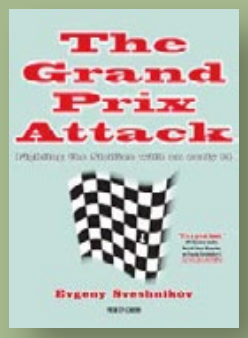
29.♗g2! White gives up the project of winning a pawn and simply goes for active pieces in the centre. **29...♗xf4 30.♗xd5 ♔g7 31.♕e4 ♕e3 32.♕h1!** This position is suddenly very difficult for Black. **32...♖d7 33.♖1d3** 33.♕f1 actually wins right away, as 33...♗e5 34.♖4d3 ♕f4 35.♖f3 is a crucial invasion on f7. **33...♕e5 34.♕f3** The black bishop is still in trouble. **34...♗h2**



35.♗e6 A cool move! But as Anand pointed out, 35.♗b3 is simpler, as 35...♖e7 36.♖e3! ♕xe3 37.♕f6+ is mate and rook to any other square on the seventh rank can be answered with 36.♕f2!, and Black has unsolvable problems with both the bishop and weaknesses on f6 and f7. **35...♖e7** There was no way to avoid material losses. **36.♖e4! ♖xe6 37.♖xe5 ♖cxe5** We thought that perhaps Black could fight on for a while, but it actually didn't take long. **38.♖d8 ♖e4 39.♔a2 ♗f4 40.♖d7 ♔g8 41.♖a7** Black resigned. White will take on a6 next.

However, already in the next round Anand suffered a serious blow against Nakamura.

Some recent NEW IN CHESS titles



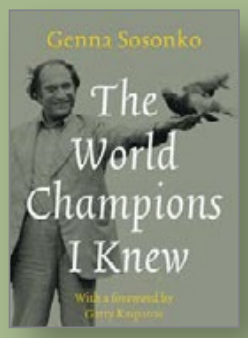
The Grand Prix Attack
Fighting the Sicilian with an early f4
Evgeny Sveshnikov 256 pages - €24.95

One of White's deadliest weapons against the Sicilian Defence finally gets the approach it deserves. By one of the most respected opening experts in the world.

"A great book." – *Matthew Sadler, British Chess Magazine, on 'The Complete c3 Sicilian' by Evgeny Sveshnikov*

Vassily Ivanchuk
100 Selected Games
Nikolay Kalinichenko 320 pages - €28.95

His best and most instructive games explained. A fascinating and rewarding journey to 'Planet Ivanchuk', the extraterrestrial location where the sphinx from Lvov is said to receive his best brainwaves.



The World Champions I Knew
With a foreword by Garry Kasparov
Genna Sosonko 240 pages - €24.95

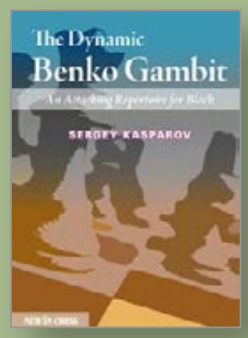
"Sosonko brings genuine delight even to the most demanding readers." – *Garry Kasparov*

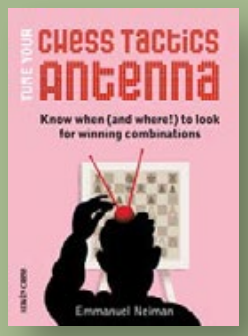
"Beautifully written and rich with amazing content." *Jeremy Silman*

The Dynamic Benko Gambit
An Attacking Repertoire for Black
Sergey Kasparov 320 pages - €28.95

"Kasparov sets out his ideas with good humour, anecdotes and sensible words of wisdom (..) This is the type of book that many readers desire." – *GM Glenn Flear*

"Kasparov writes in an engaging and somewhat humurous style. His explanations are clear and concise, and he doesn't go overboard with variations." – *Joe Petrolito, Australasian Chess Magazine*





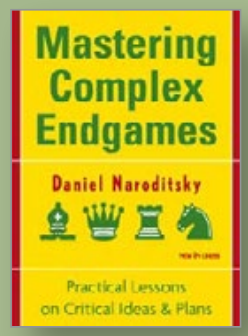
Tune Your Chess Tactics Antenna
Know when (and where!) to look for winning combinations
Emmanuel Neiman 240 pages - €24.95

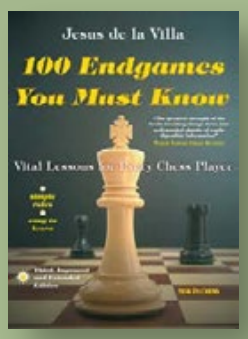
"This book is very much aimed at pratical play: what to look at, how to think, how to find good moves." *Olivier Pucher, FIDE Master and chess trainer*

"The material is very accessible and will suit players of all strengths looking to 'tune their tactics antenna'." – *Marshtower Chess Reviews*

Mastering Complex Endgames
Practical Lessons on Critical Ideas & Plans
Daniel Naroditsky 304 pages - €28.95

"It is amazing that Naroditsky writes with the routine of an old and experienced grandmaster. I cannot remember when I last saw so much text in an endgame book. The examples are well-chosen (..) The book does what it promises and that is quite a lot." – *Martin Rieger, Rochade Europa Magazine*





100 Endgames You Must Know
Third, Improved and Extended Edition
Jesus de la Villa Garcia 256 pages - €21.95

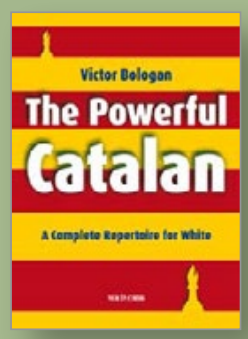
"If you really have no patience for endgames, at least read Jesus de la Villa's '100 Endgames You Must Know'." *Gary Walters Chess*

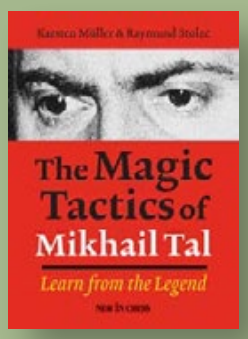
"The greatest strength of the book: breaking things down into well-worded chunks of easily digestible information." *Marshtowers Chess Reviews*

The Powerful Catalan
A Complete Repertoire for White
Victor Bologan 256 pages - €29.95

"An excellent book to begin with when you want to start playing the Catalan." *Richard Vedder, Schakers.info*

"Where else is this system dealt with so well?" *British Chess Magazine*



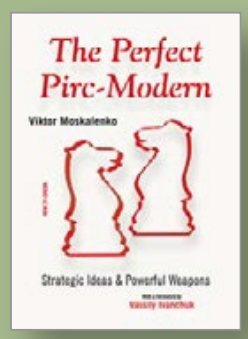


The Magic Tactics of Mikhail Tal
Learn from the Legend
Müller & Stolze 334 pages - €24.95

"If you love Tal, you'll love this book. If you love solving puzzles, you'll love this book. If you love chess history, you'll love this book. An instant classic that's suitable for players of all ratings (beginner to grandmaster)." *Jeremy Silman, author of 'How to Reassess Your Chess'*

The Perfect Pirc-Modern
Strategic Ideas & Powerful Weapons
Viktor Moskalenko 256 pages - €24.95

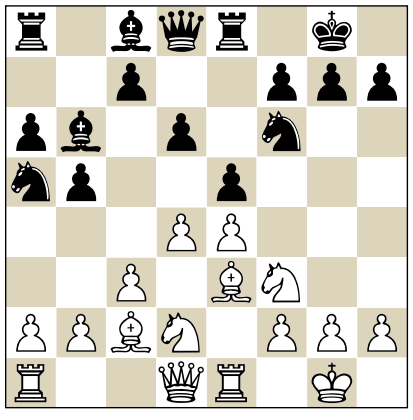
"This book will undoubtedly help you to master not just the Pirc and Modern Defenses, but also to systematize and perfect your understanding of the key points of other openings." *Vassily Ivanchuk*



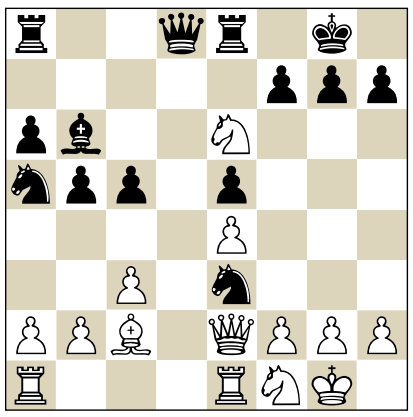
available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

RL 12.6 – C78
Vishy Anand
Hikaru Nakamura
Stavanger 2013 (4)

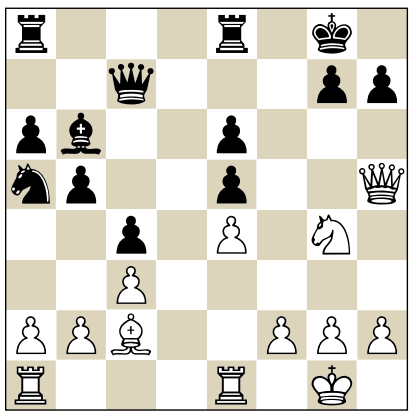
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♗c5 7.c3 d6 8.d4 ♗b6 9.♗e3 0-0 10.♘bd2 ♖e8 11.♖e1 ♘a5 12.♗c2



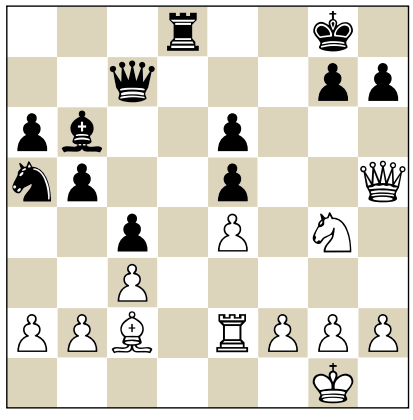
12...c5 Nakamura had prepared this new idea. 12...♗b7 13.d5 has been played before. **13.dxc5** It's hard to believe that this can be the critical test of Black's setup. **13...dxc5 14.♕e2 ♘g4 15.♘f1 ♗e6 16.♘g5 ♘xe3 17.♘xe6**



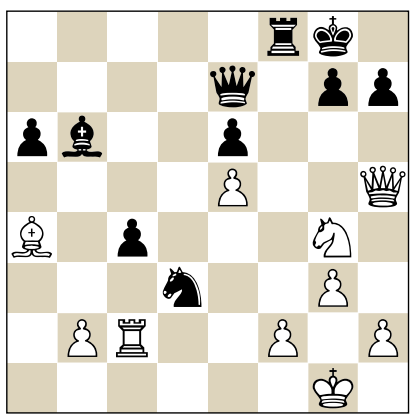
17...fxe6!? Nakamura's point, preventing White from getting access to d5. **18.♘xe3 c4 19.♕h5 ♕c7 20.♘g4**



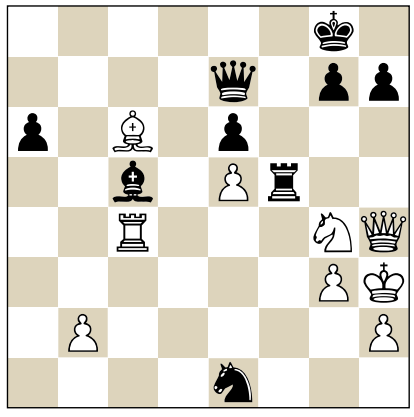
20...♖f8! Now comes a string of strong moves. It turns out that Nakamura has no intention of defending the pawn on e5. **21.♖e2 ♖ad8! 22.♖d1** After 22.♘xe5, 22...♕c5! is strong, and 22.♕xe5 ♕xe5 23.♘xe5 ♖xf2! is also unplayable for White. However, 22.g3, followed by ♔g2, was a real alternative. **22...♖xd1+ 23.♗xd1 ♖d8 24.♗c2**



24...b4! Very impressive! **25.cxb4** Both 25.♘xe5 b3 26.axb3 cxb3 27.♗d3 g6! 28.♕g5 ♘c6! and 25.♕xe5 ♕xe5 26.♘xe5 b3 27.axb3 cxb3 28.♗d3 ♗c7 win a piece for Black. **25...♘c6** Finally withdrawing the knight, defending the e5-pawn, but the ambitions now are of a much more aggressive nature. **26.♗a4 ♘xb4!** The knight is coming to d3 with tremendous force. **27.♕xe5 ♕e7 28.♕h5 ♘xa2** Black has time to restore the material balance. **29.g3 ♘c1 30.♖c2 ♘d3 31.e5 ♖f8**



Black has fantastic coordination, and Nakamura finishes the game in brilliant style. **32.♖xc4 ♗xf2+** 32...♘xf2 was possible too. **33.♔g2 ♗c5 34.♗c6** It seemed as if Anand had resigned the game by now. **34...♖f5 35.♕h4 ♘e1+ 36.♔h3**

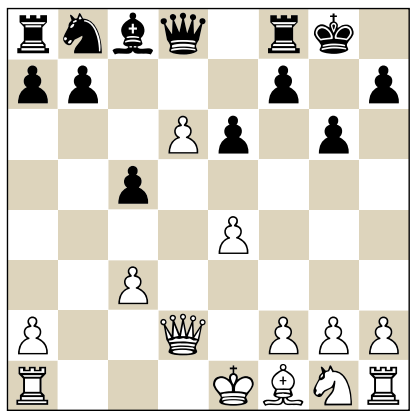


36...♕f7! This is a killer. White has no defence against rook to h5. **37.♖xc5 ♖h5 38.♗g2 ♖xh4+ 39.gxh4 ♕f5** White resigned.

We weren't quite sure whether Anand was in full control in the game against Jon Ludvig Hammer either.

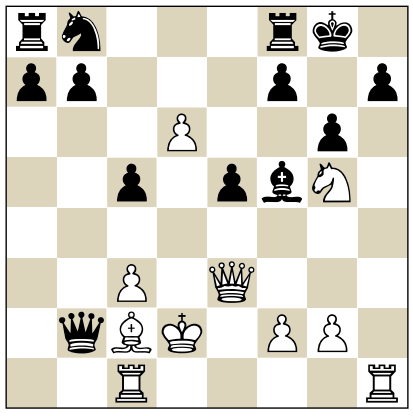
GI 3.3 – D85
Vishy Anand
Jon Ludvig Hammer
Stavanger 2013 (8)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.♗d2 ♗g7 6.e4 ♘xc3 7.♗xc3 0-0 8.♕d2 c5 9.d5 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 e6 11.d6

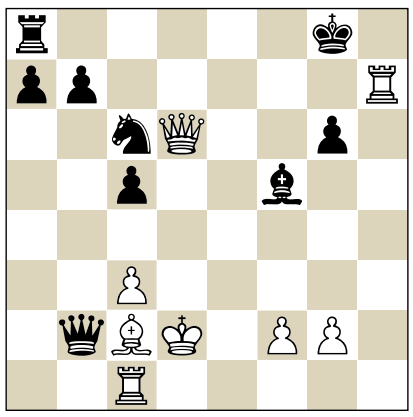


An interesting opening battle has arisen. It's not obvious whether the d6-pawn is an asset or a weakness. **11...e5 12.h4 ♗e6 13.♘h3** 13.h5 g5 didn't seem so dangerous for Black, but now we're on unexplored territory. **13...♕xh4** Anand pointed out 13...f6 14.f4. Hammer goes for the sharpest. **14.0-0-0 ♕xe4** This seemed a bit too much at first glance. Now certainly the point of no return has been passed. Either White will succeed in mating, or he will be completely lost ma-

terially. **15.♗d3** 15.♘g5 can be answered with 15...♕f4, but maybe this was White's best anyway. **15...♕a4 16.♘g5 ♕xa2** Still 16...♕f4 was an option, but Hammer wants pawns in this game. **17.♕e3 ♕a3+ 18.♔d2 ♕b2+ 19.♗c2 ♗f5 20.♖c1**



20...♖d8?? This is typical. Hammer had his chances here and there in most of his games, but failed at critical moments. It is not easy to see White having enough compensation for three pawns after 20...h5!. **21.♘xf7! ♔xf7 22.♕xe5! ♖xd6+** 22...♔g8 23.♖xh7! is also decisive. **23.♕xd6 ♘c6 24.♖xh7+ ♔g8**



25.♖d7! The only move actually, but a very convincing one. **25...♖e8 26.♕f6! ♗xd7 27.♕xg6+ ♔f8 28.♕f6+ ♔g8 29.♖h1!** This wins by force. **29...♖e2+** Desperation. **30.♔xe2 ♘d4+ 31.cxd4 ♕xc2+ 32.♔e3 ♕c3+ 33.♔f4 ♕xd4+ 34.♕xd4 cxd4 35.♔e4 a5 36.♔xd4** And White won easily.

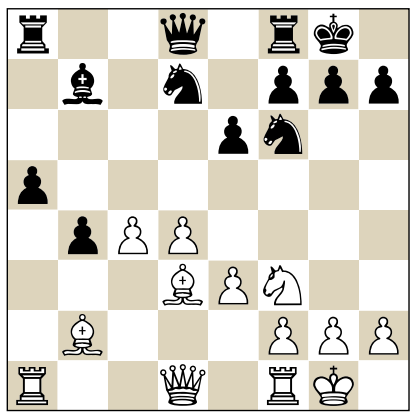
Karjakin failed to keep up the speed he had started with and when he lost to Svidler in Round 8 (while Carlsen did the same against Wang Hao, a double loss of two contenders for first prize reminiscent of the last-round drama in the Candidates' tournament in London) we entered the last round with lots of possible scenarios. Karjakin was leading with 5½ points, but only half a point behind were Carlsen and Anand, while Svidler, Nakamura and Aronian at 4½ points hadn't given up their ambitions either. The creative American was the first one to put on the pressure.

NEW IN CHESS

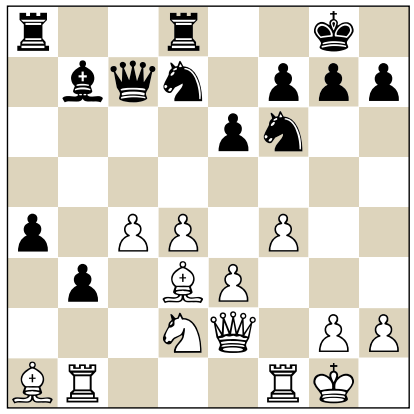
Jøran Aulin-Jansson bows deeply for (r. to l.) Kjell Madland, Heidi Jeanette Nygard, Elisabeth Faret, Siv Kristin Herikstadt and Frode Sømme.

SL 6.15 – D31
Jon Ludvig Hammer
Hikaru Nakamura
Stavanger 2013 (9)

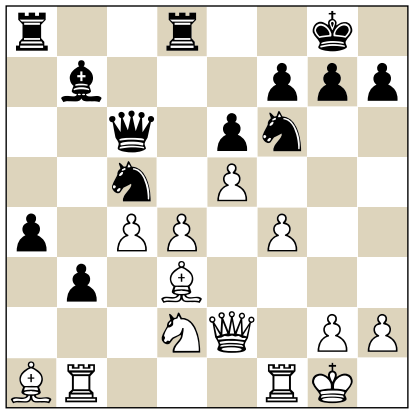
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 c6 4.♘c3 dxc4 5.e3 b5 6.a4 ♗b4 7.♗d2 a5 8.axb5 ♗xc3 9.♗xc3 cxb5 10.b3 ♗b7 11.bxc4 b4 12.♗b2 ♘f6 13.♗d3 0-0 14.0-0 ♘bd7



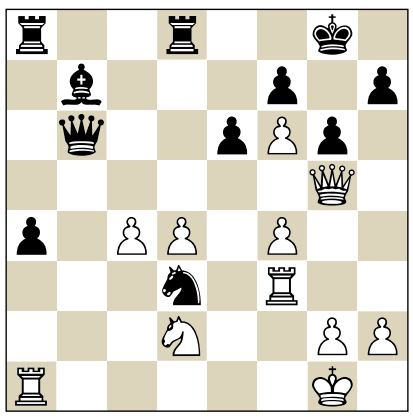
A classical Noteboom! That's a rare opening at this level. **15.♘d2** White's setup looks extremely promising, but there are lots of options here. **15...♕c7** 15...e5 16.dxe5 ♘xe5 17.♗xh7+ and 18.♗xe5 shouldn't be enough compensation for a pawn. **16.f4 a4 17.♖b1 ♖fd8 18.♕e2 b3 19.♗a1** Some Norwegians suggested 19.♖a1 here. Nakamura mumbled something about Black's 18th move not being the most precise. I don't know if it was this he had in mind.



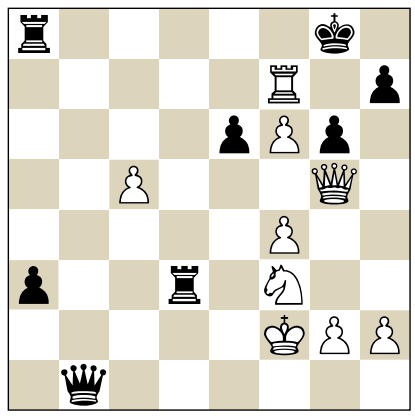
I understand nothing of the computer lines here giving Black an advantage even by letting White advance with the central pawns. Nakamura's statement that he simply would be mated if White got going makes more sense. Under these dire conditions Nakamura managed to come up with an extremely provoking idea. **19...♕d6! 20.e4 ♘c5** This is the point, and it was enough to send Hammer into almost an hour's think. **21.e5 ♕c6**



22.exf6 Nakamura thought for White to simply grab the piece with 22.dxc5 ♖xd3 23.exf6, although Black certainly has compensation after 23...♕xc5+ and 24...♖ad8. **22...♘xd3 23.♕g4 g6 24.♖f3 b2!** Nakamura didn't need much time to finish White off. **25.♕g5** 25.♖xd3 bxa1♕ 26.♖xa1 ♖xd4! 27.♖xd4 ♕c5 28.f5 ♖d8 is very destructive. **25...bxa1♕ 26.♖xa1 ♕b6**



Nakamura thrives like a fish in water in such positions and easily finds a clever way of combining attack and defence. **27.♖xd3** 27.c5 ♕b2 is no better. Black is just in time to win the f6-pawn if White tries to mate with ♕h6. **27...♖xd4 28.♖b1 ♕d8 29.♖xb7 ♖xd3 30.♘f3 a3! 31.♖xf7** Hammer was in time-trouble whereas Nakamura had plenty of time, but Nakamura kept blitzing out his clever defensive manoeuvres. **31...♕b6+ 32.c5 ♕b1+ 33.♔f2**

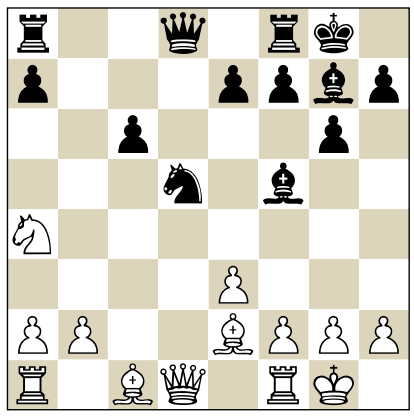


33...♖xf3+! White resigned. With no knight coming to e5 the rook can safely be taken next move.

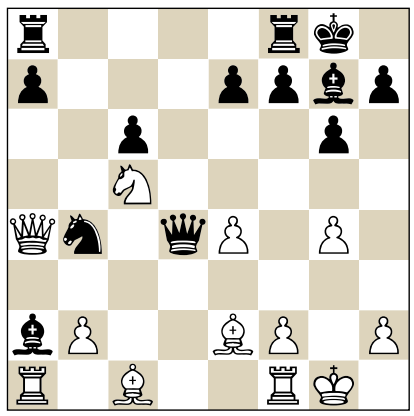
In Wijk aan Zee earlier this year, Anand lost in the last round to Wang Hao. When he won his last-round game in Baden-Baden to clinch tournament victory, he commented in relief: 'I was hoping I wouldn't do a Wang Hao today.' He shouldn't have invented that expression. Now it happened again.

EO 35.1 – A34
Wang Hao
Vishy Anand
Stavanger 2013 (9)

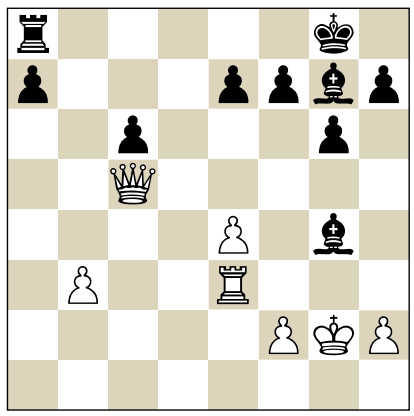
1.c4 c5 2.♘c3 g6 3.♘f3 ♗g7 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘c6 6.e3 ♘f6 7.♗e2 d5 8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.♘xc6 bxc6 10.♘a4 0-0 11.0-0 ♗f5



12.g4! It's absolutely necessary to drive Black's pieces back. **12...♗e6 13.e4 ♘b4?!** Wang suggested 13...♘b6 14.♘c5 ♕d6!?. **14.♘c5 ♗xa2 15.♕a4 ♕d4**



16.♕a5! This seemed like a move that Anand may have missed, but incredibly Black has a resource here with 16...♗e5, and after 17.♖d1 ♗xh2+ 18.♔g2 ♗c7! it's far from clear! **16...♖fd8??** Only now comes the decisive mistake by Black. **17.♔g2** Very calm, but perhaps 17.♖d1 ♕xd1+ 18.♗xd1 ♖xd1+ 19.♔g2 ♘c2 20.♕a4! would have been easier. **17...♗c4 18.♖d1 ♗xe2 19.♖xd4 ♖xd4 20.♗e3 ♖c4 21.♖e1 ♗xg4 22.b3 ♖xc5 23.♗xc5 ♘d3 24.♖e3 ♘xc5 25.♕xc5**



Stavanger 2013 — cat.XXI

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		TPR
1	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	RUS	2767	*	0	1	0	1	½	1	½	1	1	6	2886
2	Magnus Carlsen	IGM	NOR	2868	1	*	½	½	½	½	0	½	1	1	5½	2834
3	Hikaru Nakamura	IGM	USA	2775	0	½	*	½	0	1	1	½	1	1	5½	2843
4	Peter Svidler	IGM	RUS	2769	1	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	½	1	5	2804
5	Levon Aronian	IGM	ARM	2813	0	½	1	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	5	2800
6	Vishy Anand	IGM	IND	2783	½	½	0	½	½	*	0	1	1	1	5	2803
7	Wang Hao	IGM	CHN	2743	0	1	0	1	½	1	*	½	½	0	4½	2769
8	Veselin Topalov	IGM	BUL	2793	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	4	2725
9	Teimour Radjabov	IGM	AZE	2745	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	1	3	2649
10	Jon Ludvig Hammer	IGM	NOR	2608	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	*	1½	2505

NEW!

Daniel King: Powerplay 19 - Attack with 1.e4 part 2

This DVD provides you with a repertoire of attacking lines against the Scandinavian, Alekhine's Defence, the Petroff, the Philidor, the Pirc, and the Modern Defence. Many of these openings are very popular in club chess, yet they are often underestimated by players of the white pieces. Using his wealth of experience playing with 1.e4, Grandmaster Daniel King explains the openings and provides you with an aggressive system against each of them. This is the second part of Daniel King's project 'Attack with 1.e4' (part I dealt with the Sicilian, the French, The Caro Kann and 1...e5). King's recommendations aim to put your opponent under pressure right from the start of the game, and when players are under pressure, mistakes occur. This is a practical repertoire – if we study openings we want to be sure to use them in our games. After just a few moves, you will be dictating play.

29,90 €

Karsten Müller: Endgames 13 – Double Rook Endings

Double rook endings occur frequently and are different from single rook endings in several respects. However, there is much less literature on them. This DVD shall help filling the gap. Many guidelines remain valid of course like activity is the order of the day, the king wants to blockade passed pawns, the rooks does not and the rook belongs behind passed pawns be they friendly or enemy. But there are also many new motifs. Especially king safety plays a much larger role due to the increased firepower on the board. Therefore the value of extras pawns often also increases as they can provide the king with much needed shelter. Furthermore the endgame expert discusses the question of the right exchange in detail, which crops up much more often than in single rook endings. So it is important to develop a good intuition, if the attacker or the defenders profits more from an exchange of a pair of rooks.

29,90 €

Lubomir Ftacnik: The English Hedgehog Defence

This DVD by GM Ftacnik deals with the Hedgehog structure and its phenomenal potential for generating active counterplay with Black. The appeal of elastic piece development around a dynamic pawn structure has helped to spread this concept to many other openings. The author has consciously limited his survey to the English Hedgehog with an emphasis on the challenges Black faces following the centralisation of White's queen after 1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.g3 b6 5.Bg2 Bb7 6.0-0 Be7 7.d4 cxd4 8.Qxd4. While Black will have to survive various challenges to his position, as the aggressor enjoys a slight advantage in development and has great freedom of movement for his pieces, once the defender manages to fend off direct aggression, his prospects are usually quite promising. Any player able to cope with some pressure in the English Hedgehog will be amply rewarded with flexible, action-packed positions, and plentiful Black counter-chances.

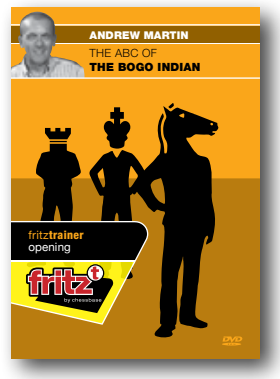
27,90 €

Alejandro Ramirez: Benkö completed

The Benko is a powerful weapon in any player's Black repertoire. However, many White players, fearing black activity and compensation, decide to avoid it altogether before black has the chance to sacrifice his pawn. This DVD offers a complete repertoire for Black players after 1. d4 in the case that White avoids the move 2. c4 or after 2. c4 c5 avoids the move 3. d5. Additionally, you will find good and aggressive black alternatives against 1. Nf3 and 1. c4, allowing you to have a full repertoire against any 1. d4 player, no matter what their move order is. The variations chosen in this DVD will be helpful not only to Benko players, but anyone that wants to battle systems such as the Zukertort, Colle, Trompowsky, the English and many others. The DVD was made with the spirit of the Benko in mind, so the lines chosen will suit positionally aggressive players perfectly.

29,90 €

Andrew Martin: The ABC of the Bogo Indian



The Bogo Indian is an attractive system for players of all levels. It provides a sound platform from which Black can begin the middlegame with confidence. After 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+ Black develops smoothly and prepares to castle. He retains maximum flexibility with his central pawns. You do not need to know an enormous amount of theory to play in this natural way and of course, this is the attraction for the club player. On this DVD Andrew Martin argues that this opening is best understood in terms of pawn structure. He demonstrates the different structures that may arise after 4.Bd2, 4.Nbd2 and 4.Nc3 and gives repertoire suggestions against each. Over nearly 5 hours you will learn how this opening works. You will then be ready to use it in your own games.

29,90 €

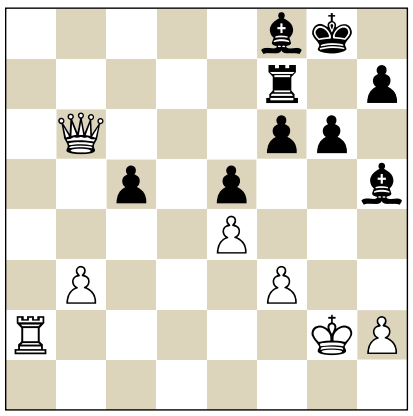
CHESSBASE GMBH · OSTERBEKSTRASSE 90A · D-22083 HAMBURG · TEL ++(49) 40/639060-12 · FAX ++(49) 40/6301282 · WWW.CHESSBASE.COM · INFO@CHESSBASE.COM

CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar · phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · **WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM**

On Norway's national holiday, May 17, Wang Hao defeated Magnus Carlsen. The next day the Chinese number one also ground down World Champion Vishy Anand.

NEW IN CHESS

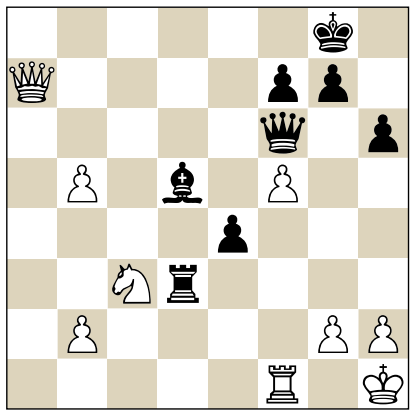
The end of a long and forced line. The other players thought Anand could hold on for very long, but Wang had no doubts and just considered it to be easily winning. **25...e5 26.♖d3** The most precise, according to Wang. **26...♖c8 27.♕xa7 ♗f8 28.♕b7 c5 29.♖d5 f6 30.♖d2 ♖e8 31.♖a2 ♖e7 32.♕b6 ♖f7 33.f3 ♗h5**



With the bishop here there's certainly no hope for Black, but White had the idea of sacrificing the rook on c5 for the dark-squared bishop also in other Black setups. **34.♖a8 ♔g7 35.♖xf8! ♖xf8 36.♕xc5 g5 37.b4 ♖a8 38.b5** Black resigned.

Both Radjabov-Svidler and Aronian-Carlsen, the other final round encounters with the top players involved, soon ended in a draw, which meant that a draw for Karjakin against Topalov would secure him the 100,000 euro first prize. Actually, that took a while. Topalov had his chances, but after some imprecise manoeuvring Karjakin got the advantage, but he took no chances and went for a draw. Congratulations to Karjakin for a highly deserved win!

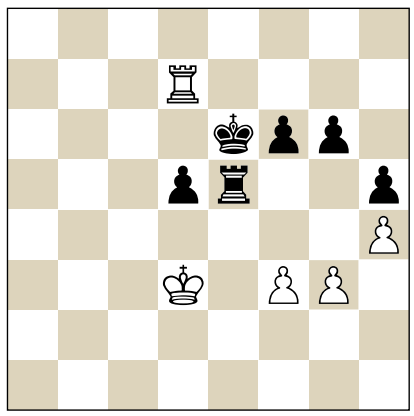
Somebody pointed out that the 'expert' commentator was biased, to which I could only respond 'of course!' I've been following almost every move by Magnus for the last 13 years or so and I guess I continued watching everything he did with special attention. It seemed like he missed more opportunities than usual this time.



Nakamura-Carlsen
Stavanger 2013 (3)
position after 29.♘c3

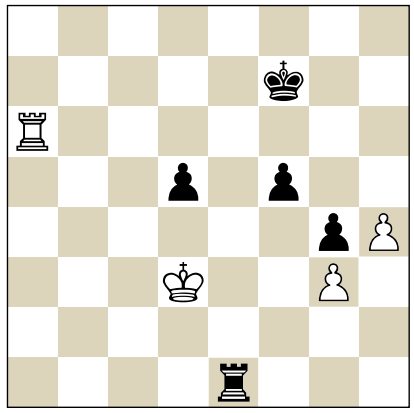
29...e3? As the computer points out 29...♕e5 is very strong. The point is 30.b6 e3 31.b7 ♗xg2+!, with a winning attack. After 31.♘xd5, Black has 31...e2 and 32...♖d1, which leaves White's only move to be 30.♘xd5, but Black's e-pawn and attack on the back rank are then much stronger than White's b-pawns. **30.♘xd5 ♖xd5 31.♕xe3 ♕xb2 32.♕e8+ ♔h7 33.♕xf7 ♕xb5 34.♕g6+ ♔g8 35.♖a1 ♖xf5 36.♖a8+ ♖f8 37.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 38.h3** Draw.

It was also surprising to see the world's number one losing the following endgame.



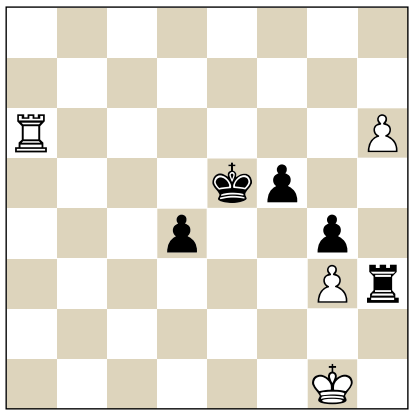
Carlsen-Wang Hao
Stavanger 2013 (8)
position after 49...♔e6

I thought these positions were an easy draw, but that is far from being the case here. **50.♖g7 g5 51.♖h7 g4 52.fxg4 hxg4 53.♖g7 f5** It's becoming complicated. The g3-pawn has become a serious target for Black. **54.♖g6+ ♔f7 55.♖a6 ♖e1**

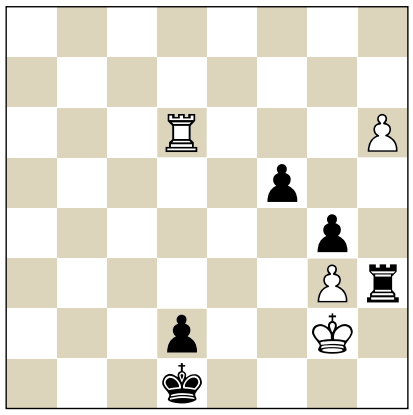


56.♔d2? Magnus is normally extremely focused on activity, so it's

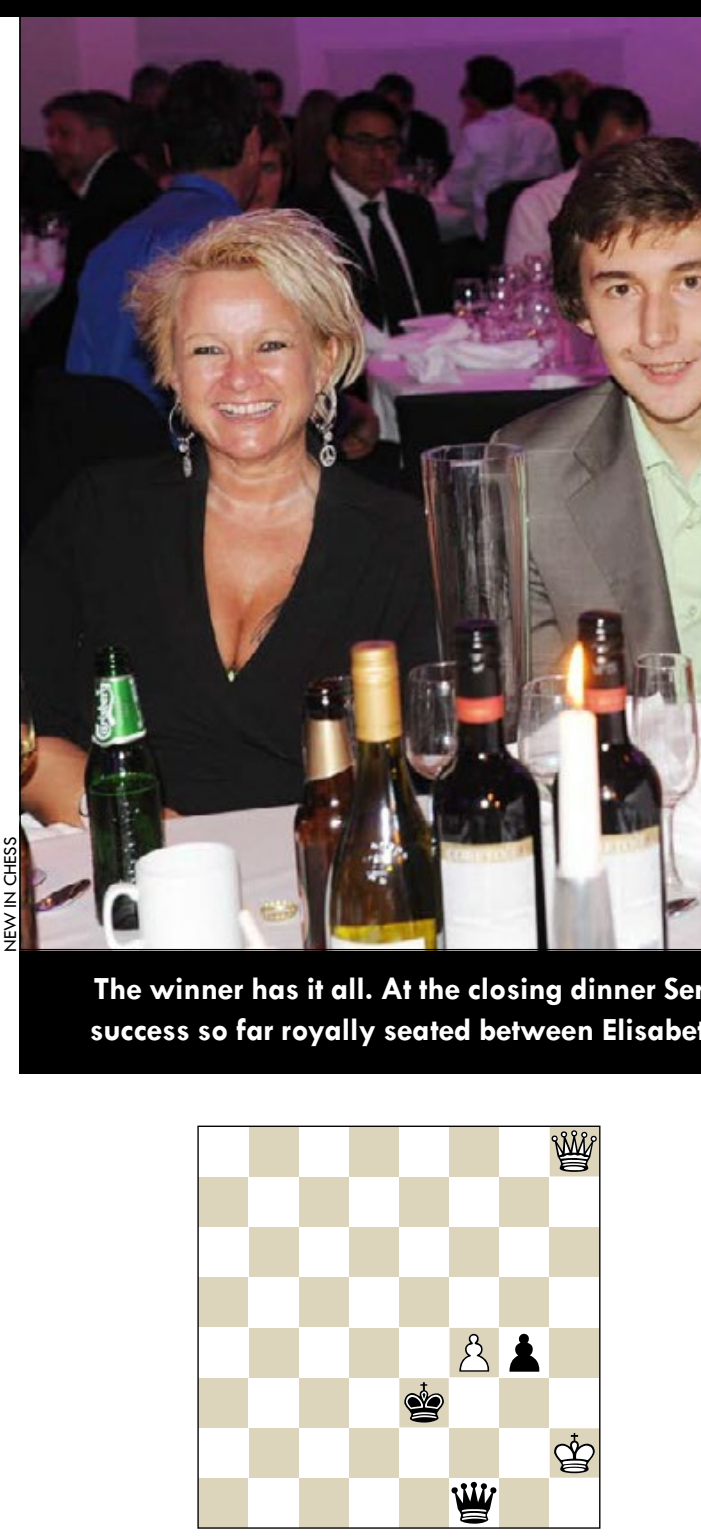
strange to see him go for this passive defence. Both 56.h5 ♖g1 57.♔d4 ♖xg3 58.♔e5 and 56.♔d4 f4 57.gxf4 g3 58.♖a2 ♖e4+ 59.♔d3! (59.♔xd5? ♖xf4 is difficult for White) 59...♖xf4 60.♔e3 ♖xh4 61.♔f3 should be drawing easily. **56...♖g1 57.♖a3 ♖g2+ 58.♔e1 ♔f6 59.♔f1 ♖c2 60.♖a6+ ♔e5 61.h5 ♖h2 62.h6 d4 63.♔g1 ♖h3**



64.♔g2? Magnus had probably already overlooked the final move in the game here. 64.♔f2 poses Black greater challenges. **64...d3 65.♖a5+ ♔d4 66.♖a4+ ♔c3 67.♖a6 d2 68.♖c6+ ♔d3 69.♖d6+ ♔c2 70.♖c6+ ♔d1 71.♖d6** Magnus must have thought this was a draw, and so did Wang, as he admitted after the game, but then suddenly the Chinese player found his 79th move in his calculations and realized it was actually winning for Black.



71...f4! 72.gxf4 ♔e2 73.♖e6+ 73.♖xd2+ ♔xd2 is no chance either. **73...♖e3 74.♖xe3+ ♔xe3 75.h7 d1♕ 76.h8♕ ♕f3+ 77.♔g1 ♕f2+ 78.♔h1 ♕f1+ 79.♔h2**



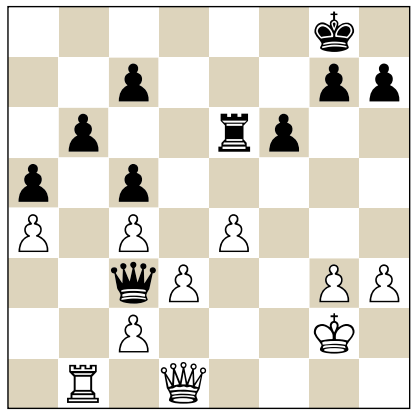
NEW IN CHESS

The winner has it all. At the closing dinner Sergey Karjakin celebrated his greatest success so far royally seated between Elisabeth Faret and Heidi Jeannette Nygard.

79...g3+! The move both players had initially missed in their calculations. White resigned. Black x-rays the queen.

The other Norwegian, Jon Ludvig Hammer, had a tough debut in this kind of tournament and scored only 1½ points. But as Jøran Aulin-Jansson, the tournament director, pointed out at the prize-giving ceremony, Jon Ludvig had 'beaten Wang Hao, who had beaten both the world's number one and the World Champion, that's pretty good!' Hammer's goal was to win one game, and he did so against the Chinese before Wang started playing brilliantly.

Hammer's greatest moment, however, was perhaps the blitz game he played against Anand on the opening night. 'h5!', was the World Champion's only comment to the game. A move that a happy Hammer called 'godlike' on Twitter. Hammer had grabbed the initiative a couple of moves earlier.

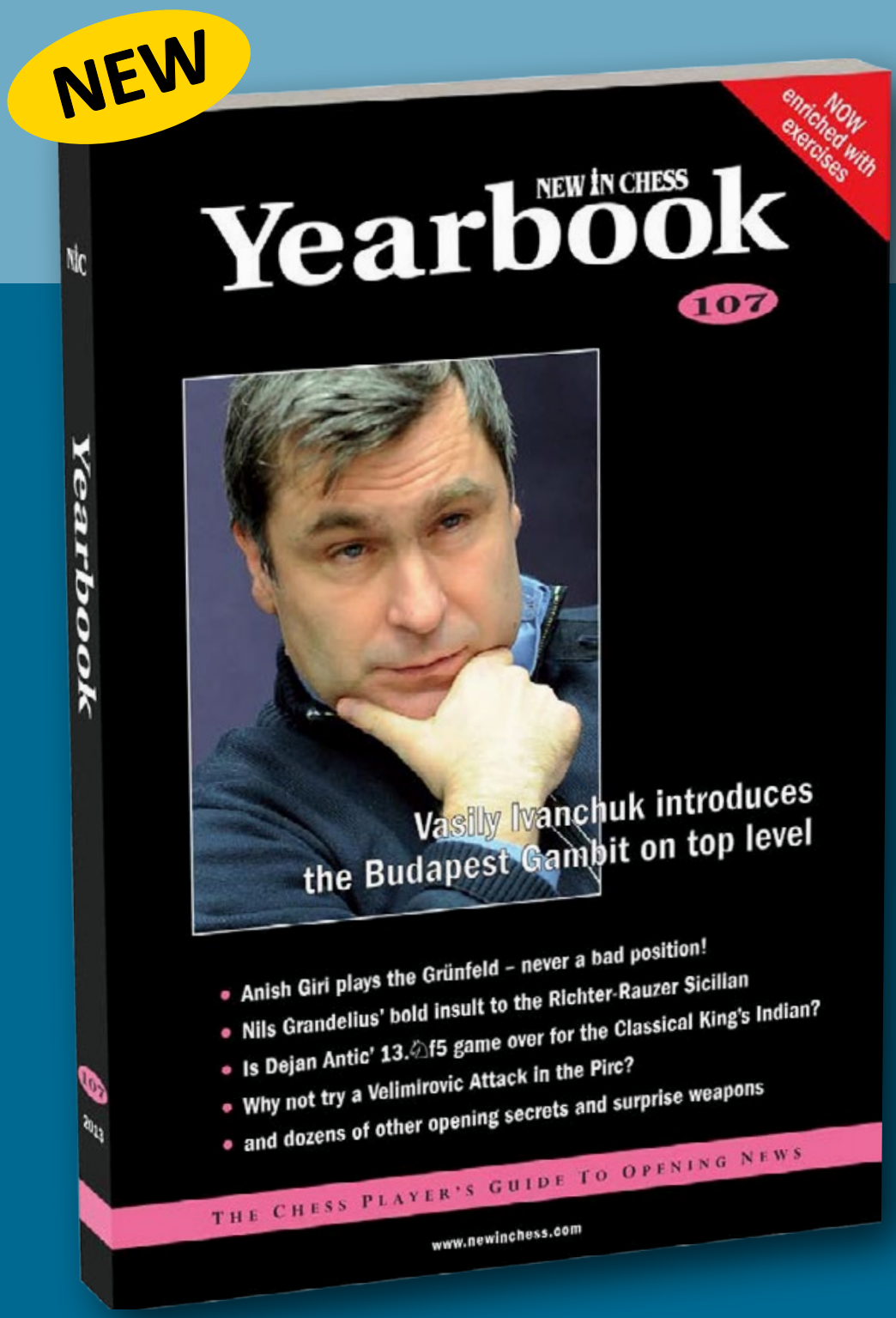


Anand-Hammer
Stavanger Blitz 2013 (7)
position after 31.♕d1

31...f5! 32.exf5 ♖e3 33.f6 h5!! This seemed to be the proudest moment in Hammer's young career, but in fact Black already has a great position and other moves also maintain the advantage. But preventing ♕g4 was very effective! **34.f7+ ♔f8 35.♔h1** There was no defence against the threat ♕e5. **35...♕e5 36.♕f1 ♕xg3 37.♕f5 ♕xh3+ 38.♕xh3 ♖xh3+ 39.♔g2 ♖e3 40.♔f2 ♖e5 41.c3 ♔xf7 42.d4 ♖f5+ 43.♔e3 g5** White resigned. ■

“A must-have book for both chess enthusiast and chess professional.”

Carsten Hansen, ChessCafe


NEW
NEW IN CHESS
Yearbook
107
NOW enriched with exercises
Vasily Ivanchuk introduces the Budapest Gambit on top level
Anish Giri plays the Grünfeld – never a bad position!
Nils Grandelius' bold insult to the Richter-Rauzer Sicilian
Is Dejan Antic' 13.♘f5 game over for the Classical King's Indian?
Why not try a Velimirovic Attack in the Pirc?
and dozens of other opening secrets and surprise weapons
THE CHESS PLAYER'S GUIDE TO OPENING NEWS
www.newinchess.com
Yearbook
2013

With answers to urgent questions like:

- How does Sergey Tiviakov think Black should defend against the Maroczy set-up?
- Would 6...♕b6 have annoyed Bobby Fischer in his pet Sozin Sicilian?
- Can Black ignore White’s threat of 7.♗f6 and just play 6...g6 in the Rauzer?
- Can White play the Velimirovic Attack also against the Pirc Defence?
- Can White play the Poisoned Pawn Variation also against the Caro-Kann Defence?
- Why does Alexander Ipatov play 3...♘e4 versus the 3.♘e5 Petroff?
- Is Mihail Marin’s 6...g6 fianchetto comfortable against the Ruy Lopez with 5.d3 ?
- Is Richard Rapport’s 11.e4! already winning in the Chebanenko Slav with 6.c5 ?
- Does Dejan Antic’ 13.♘f5 kill the Classical King’s Indian with 7...ed4 ?
- Has Peter Leko busted White in the Karpov Variation of the Nimzo-Indian?
- Can Black play the Grünfeld against the 3.f3 Anti-Grünfeld?
- How good is Topalov’s 6...c5 in the 4.♗g5 Grünfeld Gambit?
- Can Black avoid the Carlsen endgame in the Averbakh System?
- Was Vasily Ivanchuk’s Budapest Gambit correct?
- and much more

Paperback ♦ 248 pages ♦ € 29.95 ♦ available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com

Short Stories

Clubbing

In February, I received a kind invitation from Guido de Romph, team captain of the 'En Passant' chess club, to join his side in the Netherlands League.

I must confess that when, as a boy, I first dreamed of travelling the world playing chess, Bunschoten-Spakenburg, in the heart of the Dutch Bible-belt, was not exactly what I had in mind. Nevertheless I accepted with reasonable celerity, as it is always nice to be welcomed – not to mention paid.

Club chess, as a rule, is not very glamorous. If one were to rely solely upon Wikipedia, which otherwise lists my career details in extenso, you would never know that I have represented German, French, Spanish, Greek, Bosnian, Serbian, English, Chinese and now Dutch teams over the years: while, it is true, some of those appearances were fleeting, others – such as for Solingen, a quarter of a century ago – took place on a regular basis.

I recall a sneering jibe, made many years ago, by a fellow countryman about the Bundesliga, which was unquestionably the most prestigious league at the time (and probably so still now). If only, he pontificated, the Germans would divert a fraction of the expenditure on clubs into top-level tournaments, their national team would become unstoppable. This superficially plausible point was, however, made on the entirely faulty premise that local sponsorship is somehow transferable. It isn't. A businessman may be extremely passionate about his home-town team, but that doesn't imply he also wants to fund elite round-robins. The crenellated turret at Bunschoten stands testament to that local pride. How many other clubs own a building that resembles a giant chess piece? The Dubai Club, which likewise sports a rook design, is perhaps the only other place.

In the absence of Anish Giri and Jan Smeets, both apparently team stalwarts, my assistance was sought to help secure En Passant the championship. The club was in the promising position of only requiring a tie in the final game, so camera crews and journalists were present in hopeful anticipation. Unfortunately the rules of the competition were such that I had no idea who I would be facing, as board orders could be anarchically scrambled in any manner whatsoever. Incidentally, I was almost as much in the dark about my own side: when I bumped into the familiar faces of Friso Nijboer and Peng Zhaoqin in the bar prior to play, I had no idea they would be my colleagues for the day. Notwithstanding the fact that chess is essentially an individual sport, a bit of team bonding would not have gone amiss. Strangely enough, these things do help. Anyway, possible opponents included Robin van Kampen, who, a fortnight previously, had kindly informed me, in person, he would be in the United States, or Wouter Spoelman – who allegedly was up a mountain in Nepal. I also prepared for another couple of guys, to improve my chances, but in the end it was to no avail. I was sat down with black against Daan in 't Veld, rated c. 2230, about whom I knew precisely nothing. I am not going to make excuses for my disappointing performance against a much lower-rated opponent: he played very well and fully deserved having the better of the draw. Nevertheless, if the amateurs who draw up the rules for this competition wish to inculcate better habits among Dutch chess players, they would do well to acknowledge that opening preparation is a fact of life outside the narrow confines of this event. That gripe aside, the day ended most satisfactorily when we squeezed through with a narrow 5½-4½ victory.

One month later I found myself at Hinckley Island, near Leicester, attempting to replicate that triumph in the 4NCL (British league) with my club, Guildford. The exotically named location is in fact nothing more than a large hotel/conference centre off a motorway junction. The ample size is necessary to accommodate a thriving event with over 50 teams, of eight players, in three divisions. The strong social aspect of the jamboree amply compensates for the somewhat dreary surroundings.

Of late, the 4NCL has tended to be a duopoly between Wood Green – the defending champions – and ourselves, with the North London club having the upper hand. However, bolstered by a few judicious signings – Gawain Jones, Robin van Kampen and Mark

(old-hand) Hebden – our line-up was a lot stronger this year. Crucially Wood Green had dropped a point to Cheddleton earlier in the season. As anticipated, both juggernauts rolled on inexorably over the weekend to set-up the decisive last-round clash, with Guildford requiring 'only' a tie to take the title.

Team competitions, in part, reflect national characteristics. For example, the Chinese desire to suppress information is manifested in the deliberate withholding of game-scores from the domestic league, so that foreigners may not make use of them. On the regulatory front, with regard to board orders, the Brits are placed somewhere on the spectrum between German precision and Dutch mayhem (or 'liberalism', if you prefer): yes, they can be jigged around, but only within an 80 Elo point limit. A gambling element is tossed in by the allowance of an unregistered 'wild-card'.

The polite and gentlemanly rivalry that usually prevails between the leading clubs had regrettably turned acrimonious some days earlier when the captain of Wood Green, Brian Smith, abruptly registered no less than 17(!!) 2700+ superstars before the final weekend. The idea that all of these heavyweights would simultaneously descend upon Hinckley stretched credulity, to put it mildly: the intention, rather transparently, was a) to prevent any other club from registering the same players and b) to disguise Wood Green's own line-up. That this pre-emptive strike was unsporting, was beyond question: the key question was whether it was legal – and this was also exceedingly doubtful. After an emergency meeting of the custodians of the league, Brian eventually backed down, and a crisis was duly averted. He acknowledged that 'only' Vassily Ivanchuk and Alexey Shirov would play. I should emphasise that I personally like Brian a lot. However, I feel that the competitiveness of the occasion clouded his normally sober judgment.

On the eve of the confrontation, over an excellent dinner, our captain, Roger Emerson, delivered a pep-talk, with the aid of a projector, entitled 'Beat the bastards!' (meant in the nicest possible way, of course). After settling the line-up, we watched a motivational video,

'The polite and gentlemanly rivalry that usually prevails between the leading clubs had regrettably turned acrimonious some days earlier.'

of stirring scenes from various movies which included (perhaps inevitably) Henry V's uplifting address to English troops at the Battle of Agincourt, much to the amusement of the two and half Frenchmen in our team – Laurent Fressinet, Romain Edouard and Matthew Sadler. Call it corny, if you will, but it worked: we all felt better for it.

On paper, Guildford were slightly outgunned, but we began with confidence. Gawain Jones sacrificed a piece in bold speculative style against Mr. Fire-on-Board (Alexey Shirov) himself. The bemused Latvian understandably bailed out into a draw, although the kill-joy engines were less appreciative of Gawain's creativity. I had not been alone in being concerned about the veteran Mark Hebden, who had looked in poor form all weekend, but to our delight he quickly went an exchange up against the magnificently bearded Doctor Jonathan Rowson. Mark was unable to capitalise fully on his material plus and subsequently split the point. Matthew Sadler, in his first chess games in England since the 1990s, comfortably held Vassily Ivanchuk, despite handicapping himself by playing a rancid variation of the Dutch Defence. The match swung decisively in our favour, however, when Robin van Kampen butchered Pia Cramling. Our own battle-hardened female pro, Antoaneta Stefanova, came close to winning herself against Nick Pert, but every draw was bringing us nearer to the team championship. An elegant tactical trick from Romain Edouard against Luke McShane provided another half point, leaving us on the brink of a champagne celebration.

Alas, neither of the two remaining positions looked healthy. Laurent Fressinet eventually succumbed to Michael Adams' relentless technique in the difficult rook and pawn end-game. Curiously, Magnus Carlsen would also lose a very similar position to Wang Hao just a few days later. That left Guildford's destiny in the hands of your frail and aged scribe.

Despite obtaining a pleasant opening advantage, I had been comprehensively outplayed by David Howell in the middlegame. With ignominious defeat looming, I abruptly switched to swindle-mode in my opponent's habitual time-trouble, tossing pawns willy-nilly in search of activity. When the smoke cleared at move 40, it transpired that I was somehow only one pawn down, but with apparently sufficient counterplay to hold the balance. David used all his guile and cunning over the next few hours, but was ultimately unable to prevent me sacrificing a rook for a perpetual check.

It has been an exhilarating month of clubbing. While it was nice to have been a small part of En Passant's Dutch triumph – however measly my own contribution – I cannot wait for the next season in the UK. It is likely to be every bit as epic. ■

Topalov switches to top gear in Zug GP

Oh, to be a chess fan, now that April is there… Indeed, April was a wonderful time for the fanatics, who could happily switch between the browser tabs of the Alekhine Memorial, the Zug Grand Prix, the Capablanca Memorial, and even the nationals in China and Bulgaria! Fortunately, our contributing editor **Anish Giri** was not left idle, as he took part in the GP tournament in Zug, Switzerland, where he tried hard to win a game and saw Veselin Topalov continue his inspired comeback.

The Grand Prix series, an excellent idea if you ask me, creates a structure in the tournament schedule of the world's best players (and me) and serves as part of the World Championship cycle. There had been doubts and worries concerning the third leg of the 2012-13 FIDE GP, which initially was supposed to take place in Lisbon, but finally the Renova Group and the canton of Zug brought the cycle back on track. The Renova Group consists of companies from Russia, whose owner, Mr. Viktor Vekselberg, resides in Zug, which explains the choice of the location. As a player I am not really aware of all the details, but from what I have heard FIDE took over the organization from AGON. And indeed, the design of the playing hall was markedly different from the London GP last September and no longer included the bulky wooden tables or the AGON logo. Fortunately, the game we played was exactly the same and so the changes went pretty much unnoticed by the players.

Zug was the third of the planned six GP's of the 2012-13 cycle and

HARALD EINARSEN

Veselin Topalov's total concentration at the board has become his trademark.

was pretty much decisive for most of the players, as you can permit yourself only one bad event if you want to maintain chances to qualify for the next Candidates' Tournament. The idea of fighting for the World Champion's crown is as romantic as it can get in chess, yet for me, despite being the romantic person that I am, it seemed somewhat surreal to hope for qualification as long as I am still attending school (and having my final, oh yes, final exams around this period of time), and so I saw this opportunity mainly as a great way to gain more experience playing the world top.

The 11 other romantics, however, had already finished their school, so the tournament was full of tension and pressure.

Before looking at the highlights on the chess board, I feel there is a bunch of things that deserve to be mentioned. To start with, let's mention the location. Zug may sound boring to the uninitiated, but it's truly unique. Having travelled all around the world, I have to confess that I had not seen such a godly place before, with the weather switching from plus 20 to sub-zero (oh yes, snow!) within a couple of days. In fact, it took me half the tournament to figure out that we were actually not playing in the city of Zug, but in the canton of Zug and the city of Cham (to figure out how to pronounce that one, one tournament wasn't enough for me. For aesthetic reasons I would stick to 'Ham'). Fortunately, the marvellous Lake Zug was well within reach, and even though it was hidden very well behind the buildings of Cham, I am pretty sure that by the end of the tournament everyone had found it too.

Being a lazy person (is that a pleonasm?!) by nature, I also very much appreciated the venue, as we played in the same hotel, a new and very stylish SwissEver Hotel with a delicious cuisine. Perhaps I do sound somewhat too positive for a player who didn't win a single game in the tournament, but then again, I do have to stay objective, don't I?

Anyhow, time to move towards the game of chess. At the end of the day, we didn't play 11 rounds for nothing.

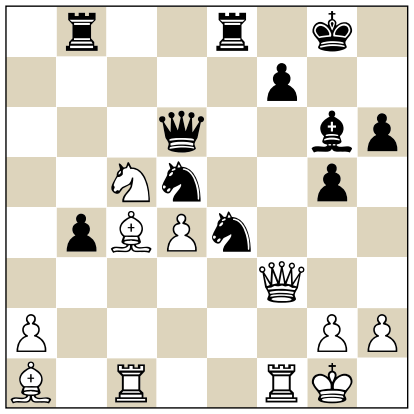
Winner Veselin Topalov scored +5 and apparently wiped out the field. I must say I have had some trouble playing him, losing a couple of games and not winning a single one out of the five games that we played. Perhaps I still can't forget how much I was impressed when reading the tournament book of the 2005 World Championship in San Luis, where he scored close to 100% against world class opposition in the first half of the event. Anyhow, in my first round I was paired against the same Veselin, and to my surprise I managed to catch him off guard with a trendy variation in the g3 Grünfeld. If I had some edge then definitely not for too long, and we drew quite quickly.

Alexander Morozevich and Fabiano Caruana seemed to be in form, as they both won their first game quite convincingly against Rustam Kasimdzhanov and Teimour Radjabov respectively, the latter of whom still seems to be struggling with the bad form that plagued him in London.

The first sign that luck might smile on Topalov again was when he managed to win an important game against Peter Leko in the second round. As someone joked, the person who beats Leko is sure of first place, and indeed Peter backed up his solid reputation by drawing all the other games he played in Zug.

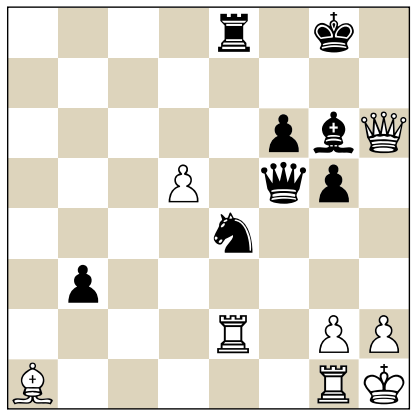
NI 27.2 – D38
Veselin Topalov
Peter Leko
Zug 2013 (2)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗b4 5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗g5 h6 7.♗h4 c5 8.e3 c4 9.♘d2 g5 10.♗g3 ♗f5 11.♗e5 ♗xc3 12.bxc3 ♘bd7 13.♗d6 ♕b6 14.♗b4 a5 15.♗a3 ♕c6 16.♗e2 b5 17.0-0 ♖b8 18.f3 b4 19.♗b2 0-0 20.♖c1 ♘b6 21.♗a1 ♕e6 22.e4 dxe4 23.cxb4 axb4 24.fxe4 ♘xe4 25.♗xc4 ♘d5 26.♘b3 ♗g6 27.♘c5 ♕d6 28.♕f3 ♖fe8



29.♘a6 ♖b7 30.♗xd5 ♕xd5 31.♘c7 ♖xc7 32.♖xc7 ♕xa2 33.♕h3 ♕d5 34.♕xh6 ♘c3 35.♔h1 ♕f5 36.♖g1 ♘e4 37.♖c2 b3 38.d5 f6 39.♖e2

By this time a lot had already happened. Veselin did not seem to be up to date in the Neo-Ragozin (with 6... h6!?), popularized by Pavel Eljanov and quickly picked up by former Women's World Champion Hou Yifan. Nevertheless the game was a mess. Black sacrificed (but note the cute 29.♘a6! trick, so he probably blundered) an exchange. The game remained unclear and now reached its culmination. Unfortunately for Peter, at this point he had around 10 seconds left for two more moves and that proved fatal.



39...♗f7??

A blunder.

39...♔f7! would have led to an advantage. Considering the time-pressure it was a 50-50 lottery (Russian roulette perhaps?), which Topalov won.

After 39...♔f7! play might continue 40.d6 ♘g3+ 41.hxg3 ♖xe2 42.d7! ♖d2! (42...♕xd7 43.♗xf6!) 43.♔h2 ♖xd7 44.♖c1, and Black is absolutely fine.

Also good was 39...♖e7, when Veselin would have had to find the following shuttle manoeuvre: 40.♖c1! ♖c7 41.♖ce1!, and White should hold: 41...♖h7 42.♕xh7+! ♗xh7 43.♖xe4.

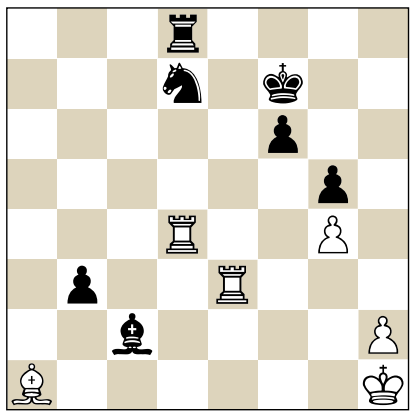
40.d6 ♕g6?

40...♗d5! was still OK for Black.

41.♕xg6+ ♗xg6

Now it's White who is playing for the win. A painful turn of events for Peter.

42.d7 ♖d8 43.♖d1 ♔f7 44.g4 ♘c5 45.♖d6 ♘e4 46.♖d4 ♘c5 47.♖e3 ♗c2 48.♖c3 ♘xd7 49.♖e3



49...f5?

Trying to reduce the material, but the d-file pin is deadly. According to Topalov, Black could still have held if he had found the cute and pretty straightforward defensive idea of 49...♔g6! 50.♗b2 ♖a8! 51.♖xd7 ♖a2 52.♗d4 b2 53.♗xb2 ♖xb2. I think to say that this is a draw is a little optimistic, but Black is still fighting.

50.♗b2 fxg4 51.♖d5 ♔g6 52.♖e7 ♖a8 53.♖dxd7 ♖a2 54.♖d6+ ♔h5 55.♗g7 g3 56.h3 ♗g6 57.♖ee6 b2 58.♗xb2

Black resigned.

After two exciting rounds we drifted towards the first rest day with 10 draws (5 games, 2 rounds). As for myself, I was getting nowhere with white and playing pretty decently with black. Pretty dull stuff, if you ask me.

The rest day came in time and frankly, having spent most of my time in the hotel so far, I didn't hesitate to join the tempting excursion to Lake Zug, a boat trip with a barbecue (yummy). It was on that day that I got to know what was the deal with the Zug-Cham confusion and frankly, the actual city of Zug impressed me as well. There was a sigh from the players when one of the organizers said: 'First we wanted to put you guys here...', pointing at the casino right on the lake shore...

The rest day was good, perhaps too good, as my game against Morozevich went wrong from the start. Due to unnecessarily creative play by my opponent, I managed to get back in the game, but eventually I became too emotional and for no reason gave away my only (yet extra) protected passed pawn, and went on to lose the game. That same round saw plenty of exciting games. The one that surely stood out was the game played by Sergey Karjakin, who, against Mamedyarov, had a chance to unleash a typical yet new idea in the Caro-Kann.

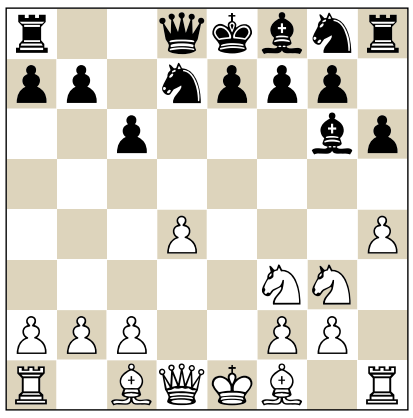
ANASTASIYA KARLOVICH

In Round 2, Veselin Topalov won a crucial game against Peter Leko, who doesn't lose very often. The Hungarian drew all his other games in Zug.

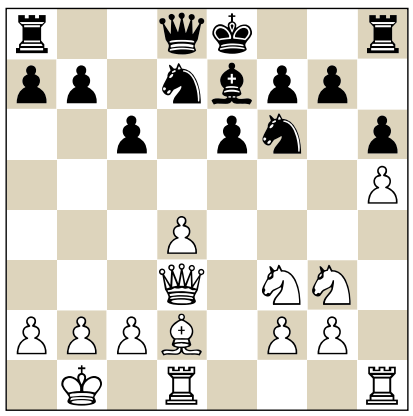
NOTES BY
Sergey Karjakin

CK 12.3 – B19
Sergey Karjakin
Shakhriyar Mamedyarov
Zug 2013 (5)

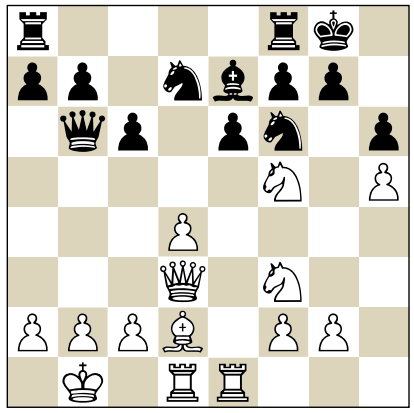
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 Although I play this from time to time, I think that Shakhriyar had mainly prepared for 3.e5, and I was able to surprise him.
3...dxe4 4.♘xe4 ♗f5 5.♘g3 ♗g6 6.h4 h6 7.♘f3 ♘d7



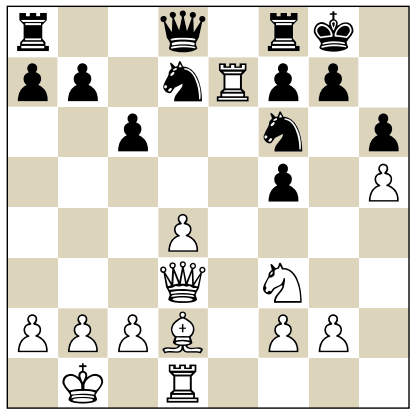
8.h5 ♗h7 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 e6 11.♗d2 ♘gf6 12.0-0-0 ♗e7 13.♔b1



13...♕b6 The main move is 13...0-0, but the move in the game is also quite interesting.
14.♖he1 0-0 15.♘f5

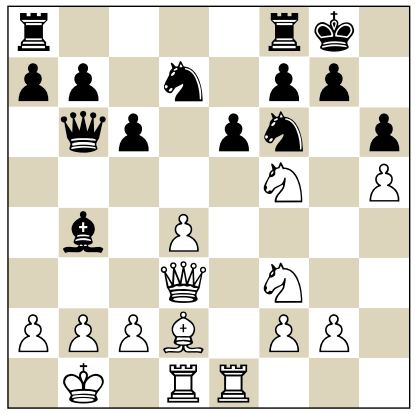


15...♗b4 Some time before our game, an important game for the assessment of the 13...♕b6 variation was played, Kasimdzhanov-Ruck, German Bundesliga 2013, in which the stronger 15...exf5! 16.♖xe7 ♕d8 occurred.



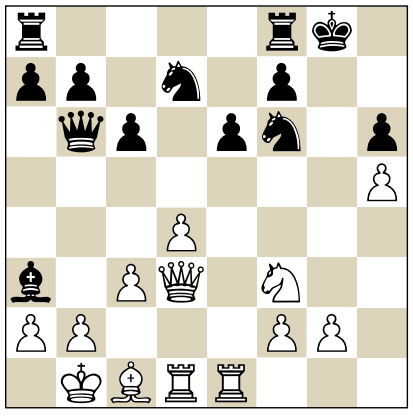
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

Later in this tournament, in Round 10, Shakhriyar defended this position against Topalov. Despite the doubled pawns, Black's knight acquires the strong e4-square, and only further experience will be able to show whether White has any possibility here of fighting for an advantage.
But what is wrong with the text-move? It would appear that White has nothing better than the retreat of his knight, and the computer initially considers that Black is alright...



16.♘xh6+! Of course, it is not so difficult to find this move in preparation. Modern engines are so strong, that whereas previously this would have been regarded as an intuitive sacrifice, now this is a position which can be analysed if not to a result, then at least to a clear assessment. However, at the board it is in any case always rather terrifying to sacrifice material, without obvious compensation, although when it all turns out well this is doubly pleasant!
16...gxh6 17.c3 ♗a3 18.♗c1
So, what has White achieved? It appears that he has only a pawn for the piece, and for the moment there are no threats, but in view of the fact that the black queen on b6 cannot come to the defence of its king, whereas White has several attacking ideas, the main of which is g4-g5, the position can be assessed in White's favour!

Susan Polgar Chess Daily News
Everything you need within your fingertips
Bringing you updated, timely, fair, and objective chess daily news and information from around the globe
News * Puzzles * Improvement Tips * Analysis * Videos * Trivia * and much more
www.ChessDailyNews.com

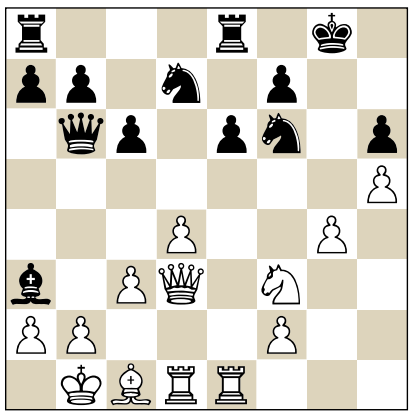


18...♖fe8?! This is already a serious mistake. Essentially the only possibility of staying in the game is 18...♔g7, with the idea of playing ...♖h8 and returning with the king to f8. Even so, Black's position gives serious cause for alarm, and I would not recommend trying to defend it... Nevertheless, since Black has already reached it, there was no choice. 18...♔g7 had to be played. The move in the game gives Black no opportunity to evacuate his king, and the return of the bishop to f8 does not bring the king any relief.

I should also mention that if Black wants to prevent g2-g4 by 18...♘g4, then 19.♘d2! is strong, with the inclusion of the queen and a big advantage for White.

19.g4!

Simple and strong! Black no longer has any normal defence against g4-g5.



19...♘h7?!

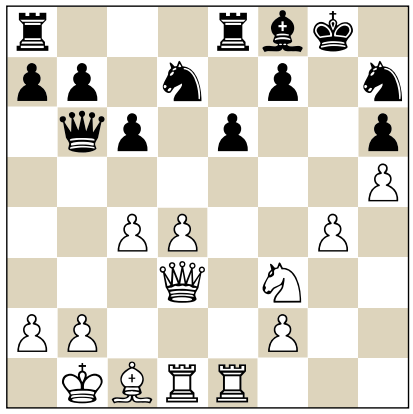
Shakhriyar was pinning his hopes on this move, but he missed my reply. However, other suggestions do not bring any particular relief. For example, if 19...♗f8, then 20.c4!? followed by g4-g5 is possible, and White develops a very strong initiative.

20.c4!

At the press conference Sergey Karjakin revealed more details of his stunning homework. Shakhriyar Mamedyarov and Anastasiya Karlovich are duly impressed.

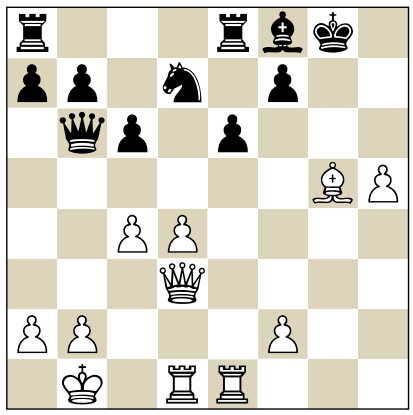
By diverting the bishop away from the b2-point, White develops a decisive attack.

20...♗f8



21.g5 Also strong was 21.♖g1, and if 21...f6, then all the same 22.g5! hxg5 23.♗xg5 fxg5 24.♕g6+ ♗g7 25.♘xg5 and wins.

21...hxg5 22.♘xg5 ♘xg5 23.♗xg5

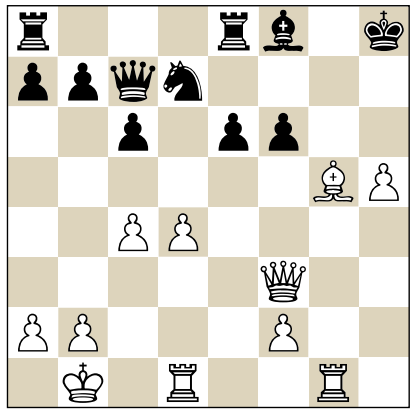


23...♔h8 Black also fails to save the game with 23...♗e7 24.♖g1 ♗xg5 25.♖xg5+ ♔f8 (or 25...♔h8 26.♖dg1 ♖g8 27.♕e3) 26.♕g3 ♔e7 27.c5 ♕b5 28.♕d6+ ♔d8 29.h6 and White wins.

24.♖g1 ♕c7 25.♕f3

White's play is simple and logical.

25...f6 Equally hopeless for Black is 25...f5 26.♕g2 ♗d6 27.♗d8.



26.♗f4?!

It is a human desire to regain the piece, but 26.♗d2! was more forceful, when Black has no defence against the invasion with ♖g6 and ♖dg1. For example: 26...♘b6 27.♖g6 ♕h7 28.♔a1 ♘d7 29.♖dg1 ♕f7 30.h6 ♔h7 31.♖g7+ ♗xg7 32.hxg7 ♔g8 33.♕h1 ♕xg7 34.♗h6 and White wins.

26...♗d6 27.♕g3

ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2014

ACO
Amateur Chess Organization

07th - 16th June 2014
Rhodes (Greece)

From 549 EUR per person All-Inclusive

9 rounds Swiss-system / Prizes: 5000 EUR (21 prizes) / 1000 m2 playing hall
7 Groups: A: 2201 – 2400 B: 2001 – 2200 C: 1801 – 2000
D: 1601 – 1800 E: 1401 – 1600 F: 1201– 1400 G: 0 (unrated) – 1200

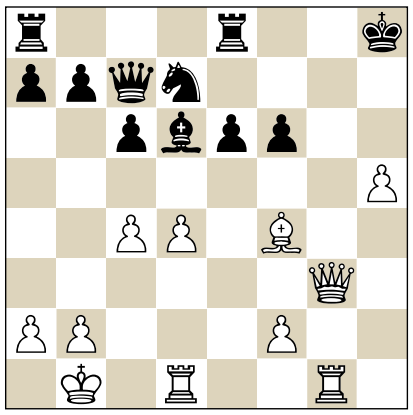
9 overnight stays in 4 or 5 star All-Inclusive Esperides hotels with private beach

Limited number of rooms - expected deadline December 2013

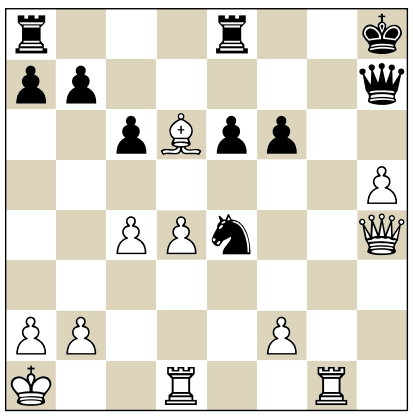
For more information and registration please send an email to
rhodes@amateurchess.com

Special discount for early bookings until 15th September 2013

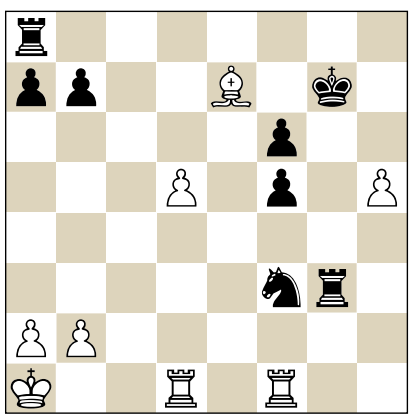
www.amateurchess.com/rhodes



27...♘c5 27...♖g8 28.♗xd6 ♖xg3 29.♗xc7 could have prolonged the resistance, although it should not change the result of the game. **28.♗xd6 ♕h7+ 29.♔a1 ♘e4 30.♕h4**



Now White is a pawn up with a continuing attack. The rest is a matter of technique. **30...♖g8 31.f3 ♘g5 32.♕f4 ♕f5 33.♕xf5 exf5 34.♗e7 ♘xf3** Nothing is changed by 34...♔h7 35.♗xf6 ♘xf3 36.♖xg8 ♔xg8 37.d5 cxd5 38.cxd5 ♔f7 39.♗c3 and wins. **35.♖gf1 ♖g3 36.d5 cxd5 37.cxd5 ♔g7**



38.♖d3 ♔f7 39.♗d6 ♘h2 40.♗xg3 Black resigned in view of 40...♘xf1 41.♗f4, when the knight cannot come back into play, and White either wins it or queens one of his pawns.

Despite the inaccuracy 26.♗f4, I conducted the game well, and it could have been a turning-point in my tournament. But subsequently I myself spoiled everything, by not winning against Caruana, and in the last two rounds I overstepped the mark against Kamsky and Topalov. Looking ahead, I can say that this tournament made me pretty angry, and this proved useful before Norway Chess, where right from the start I found my form!

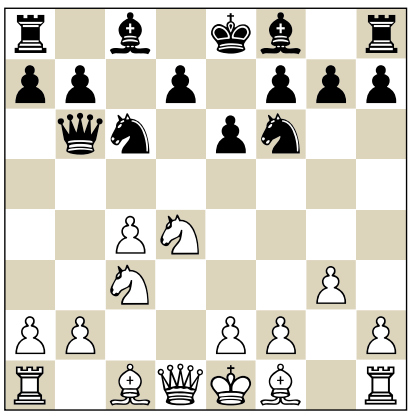
■ ■ ■

Morozevich, who beat me, took the lead together with Topalov and Ponomariov. My precious gift (at the end of the day it was the only game that I lost) wasn't appreciated and Morozevich collapsed, losing three games in a row. One of them was a key game against the tournament winner.

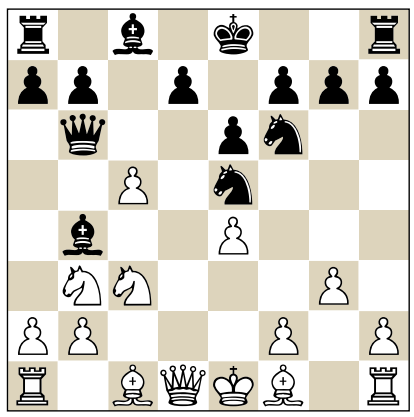
NOTES BY
Veselin Topalov

EO 32.4 – A33
Alexander Morozevich
Veselin Topalov
Zug 2013 (8)

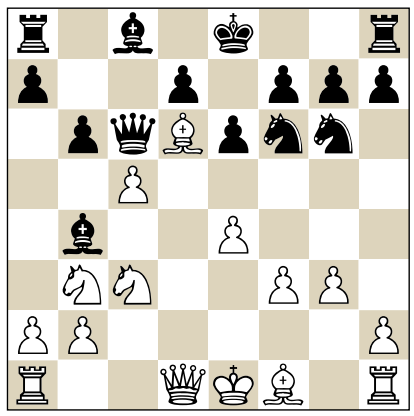
This game was played before the free day and at this point I was sharing first place with Morozevich and Ponomariov. Overall, I was not so successful in guessing the openings in Zug, but this game was an exception.
1.♘f3 c5 I am ready for a Sicilian.
2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘c6
The Four Knights in the English.
4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 e6 6.g3 ♕b6



I was lucky that I had been trying to find some ideas for White in this line.
7.♘b3 ♘e5 8.e4 ♗b4 9.c5
Here the main move is 9.♕e2, as was played by Morozevich against Leko and Grischuk. But he plays a novelty that I had also been trying to make work for White. It is a good idea if your opponent has to find his way over the board, but I was prepared.

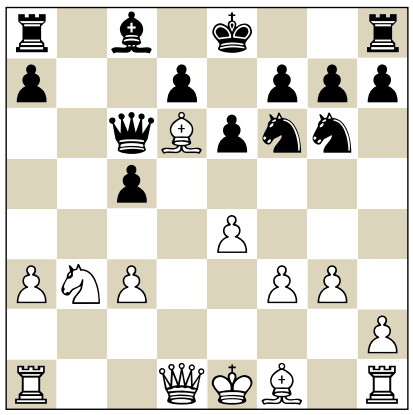


9...♕c6
If Black takes, 9...♗xc5 10.♘xc5 ♕xc5, White has compensation, but it is playable for Black. The text is also critical and I played it very quickly.
10.f3 b6 This move leads to very concrete play. Initially this looks very dangerous for Black, because I allow the white bishop to d6, where it blocks my pieces and prevents me from castling. At first the computer wants to play 10...♘xe4, but if you leave it some time it will show that it is not good. 10...d6 is a little bit worse for Black, because with the knights on b3 and c3, the structure is slightly better for White.
11.♗f4 ♘g6 12.♗d6

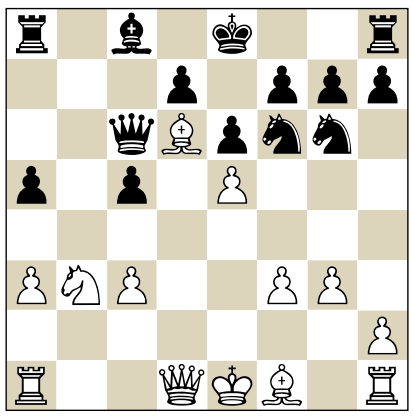


12...bxc5
But now White has to lose a tempo.

13.a3
This is absolutely the only move, because White doesn't want to allow ...♘d5, when the white bishop is hanging.
13...♗xc3+ 14.bxc3
And now comes another only move that you have to know in advance, and of course I blitzed it out:

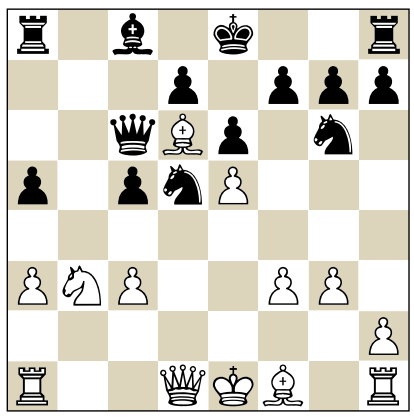


14...a5
The a5-square is very important, as ♘a5-c4 was the threat. This is the critical position, which I also had reached looking at it from the white side. And this was what I didn't really like, the move 14...a5. Otherwise 9.c5 is a good novelty, but maybe he just chose the wrong guy to play it against. Somehow White is not able to keep control of the bishop on d6.
15.e5
Played rather quickly and I think it's a mistake.
After 15.♘xc5 Black has 15...♘d5, and now on 16.e5 White can play 16...f6 or 16...♘e3, both with good play.
15.♕d2 was an interesting option.

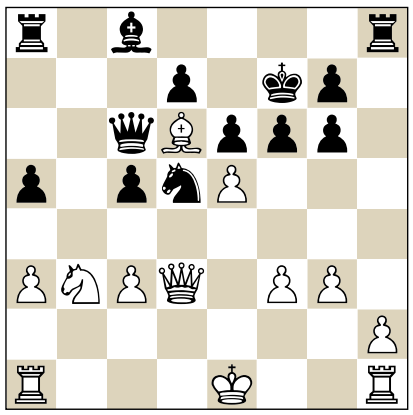


15...♘d5
I also played this quite quickly, as I was rather excited and wanted to show that I knew everything. Playing the knight to d5 was Black's main idea, but here it is a mistake.
Later, when I checked my file on this line, I found that the strongest move is 15...♘g4, with a double attack on e5, and after 16.fxg4 ♕xh1 Black is fine.
Also possible is 15...♘e4, but the difference is that here White has 16.♗b5 (after 16.fxe4 ♕xe4+ 17.♕e2 ♕xh1 18.0-0-0 ♗b7 Black is a tempo up compared to the position after 15...♘g4 16.fxg4 ♕xh1) 16...♕xb5 17.fxe4, which is still good for Black, but my chances after 15...♘g4 are better.

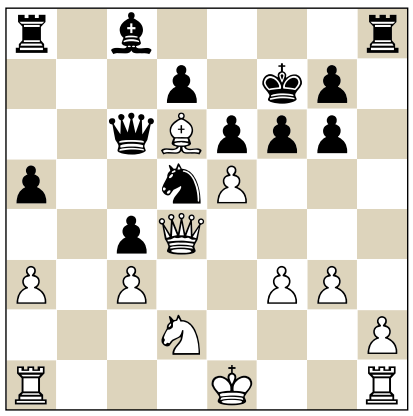
> 'I was rather excited and wanted to show that I knew everything.'



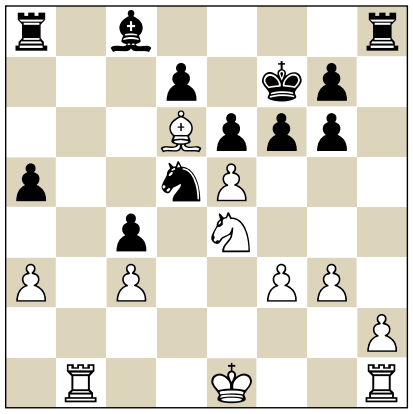
16.♗d3
Played after some thought and not a bad move.
Still, quite an interesting option for White, and more critical, was 16.♕d2, with the idea of 16...f6 17.f4, which is quite messy, for instance 17...♘dxf4 18.gxf4 ♕xh1 19.0-0-0, and I didn't like this position, as ♗g2 is an annoying threat.
16...f6
At this point I didn't think I was in danger. My king is going to f7 and I am constantly trying to kick the bishop on d6.
17.♗xg6+ hxg6 18.♕d3 ♔f7



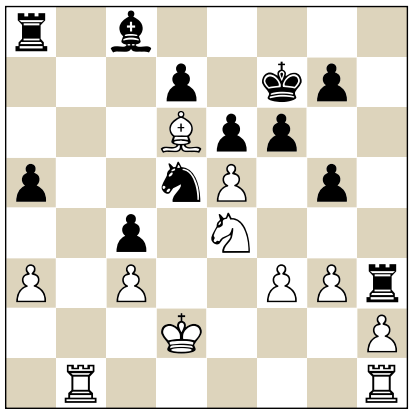
19.♘d2 This move I hadn't expected. White wants to put the knight on e4 and dominate.
19...c4
I decided to play this, aiming for the exchange of queens, as I felt that with the queens White had some compensation for the pawn. Without queens my king is safe and my structure is good. And with the opposite-coloured bishops I will be out of danger. I also wanted to put my pawn on c4 to secure the position of the knight on d5.
If I close the position with 19...f5, White can play 20.0-0, after which ♘e4 continues to be a possibility.
20.♕d4



20...♕b6
Of course I went for the exchange, and the following moves were more or less forced.
21.♕xb6 ♘xb6 22.♖b1 ♘d5 23.♘e4
In order to protect the pawn on c3.



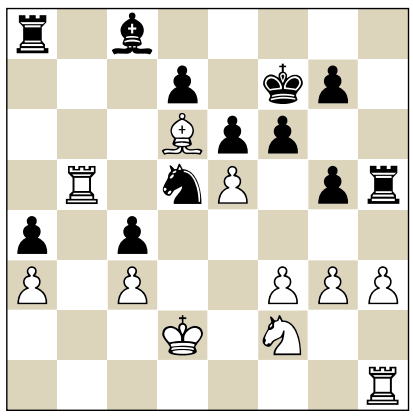
23...g5
Improving my pawn structure. Sometimes I can go to g6 with my king.
24.♔d2
Another possibility was 24.0-0, when the pawn on h2 is defended by the king and not by the rook, and White can double rooks on the b-file and just stay put.
The text-move defends the pawn on c3, so the knight on e4 may go to c5.
24...♖h3



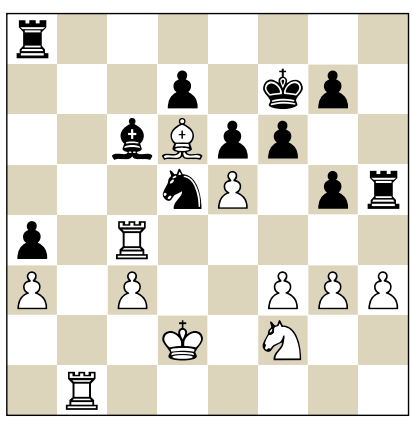
Basically the idea is to double rooks on the h-file at some point. Under certain circumstances I might even give up my bishop on a6 if it is attacked by the white knight, as the rook check on h2 may be very uncomfortable for White, as I will also take the pawn on c3.
25.♘f2 ♖h5 26.♖b5
Another idea was to play 26.a4, in order to stop Black from doing so, when Black can stop ♖b5 with 26...♗a6.
26...a4 I have to play this first, before I can develop my bishop.
27.h3
A useful move, which White has to play sooner or later.

ANASTASIYA KARLOVICH

Alexander Morozevich could hardly have chosen a worse opponent to try his new idea. Topalov: 'It's a good idea if your opponent has to find his way over the board, but I was prepared.'

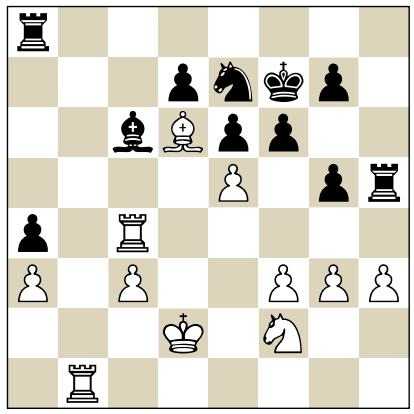


27...♗a6 28.♖c5
I was also considering 28.♖b2 for White. The text-move allows me to develop my bishop. I am returning the pawn, but the bishop will stand very well on the long diagonal.
28...♗b7 29.♖b1 ♗c6 30.♖xc4

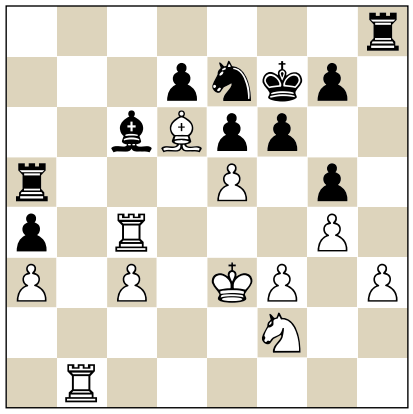


Now White has the positional threat of sacrificing the rook on c6, followed by ♖b7+ and c4, trapping the knight.

30...♘e7 Black is fine and my opponent was getting in some sort of time-trouble. He has to be careful.



31.g4
I'm not so sure about this move. It stops the knight from going to f5, but at the same time the pawns on h3 and f3 become weak.
I was considering 31.♗xe7 ♔xe7 (or 31...♗d5, not to allow the sacrifice) 32.♖xc6 dxc6 33.♖b7+, and White has some compensation, but he is fighting for a draw.
31...♖hh8
31...♖h7 would be a mistake, as 32.♗xe7 ♔xe7 33.exf6+ gxf6 34.♖xc6 wins a piece.
32.♔e3
Here the king protects the f3-pawn, but it also exposes itself to checks.
32...♖a5

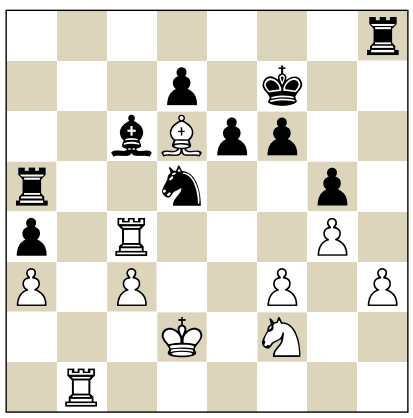


White is already in trouble, because he cannot sustain his structure and only weaknesses are left.

33.exf6 ♘**d5+** I could also have simply taken back immediately, as the exchange of the bishop for the knight does not really ease White's task.

34.♔**d2 gxf6**

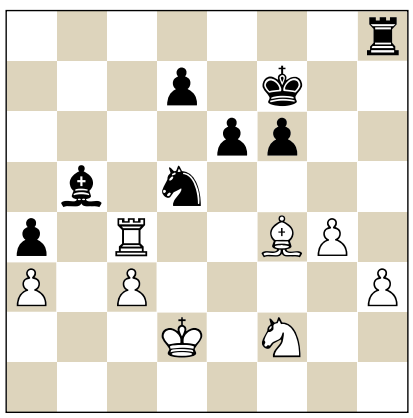
With the threat to go ...e5, followed by ...♘f4, attacking the pawn on h3.



35.f4 gxf4 36.♗**xf4** ♖**b5**

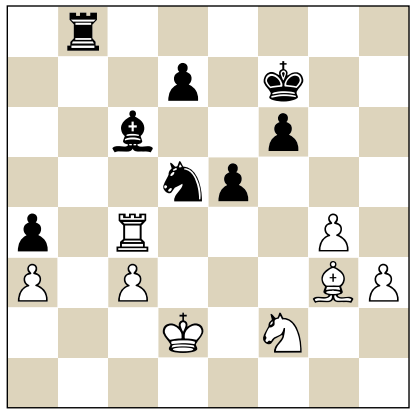
Stronger was 36...e5 37.♗g3, followed by 37...♘c7, but I had seen that I could penetrate along the b-file.

37.♖**xb5** ♗**xb5**



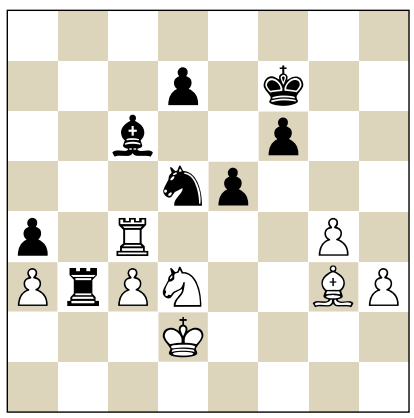
38.♖**d4** 38.♖c5 leads to a very bad ending after 38...♘xf4 39.♖xb5 ♘xh3.

38...♗**c6 39.**♗**g3 e5 40.**♖**c4** ♖**b8**



Black has an advantage thanks to the weak pawns on a3 and h3, but White is certainly not lost yet and has drawing chances.

41.♘**d3** ♖**b3**

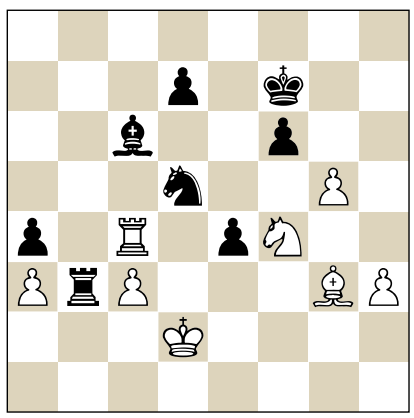


42.g5 After this move White is close to losing.

White could have played an interesting piece sacrifice with the idea to eliminate all of Black's central pawns: 42.♗xe5 fxe5 43.♘xe5+ ♔e7 44.♘xc6+ dxc6 45.♖xc6 ♖xa3 46.♔c2 ♔d7, and White has good drawing chances.

42...e4 A good move, but 42...♗b5 was even stronger.

43.♘**f4** The best try. 43.♖xe4 is not possible because of 43...♘xc3 followed by 44...♘e4+ and complete destruction.

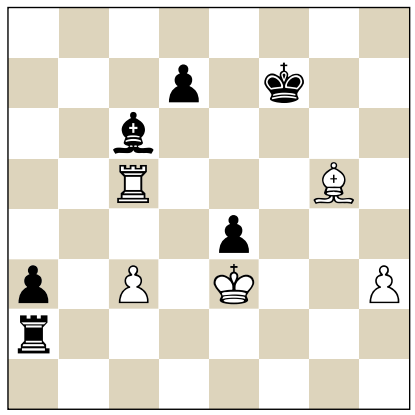


43...♘**xf4** Also possible was 43...♖b2+ 44.♔c1 ♖c2+ 45.♔xc2 ♘e3+ 46.♔c1 ♘xc4, and the pawn on a3 also falls.

44.♗**xf4** ♖**xa3** More precise would have been to take on g5 first.

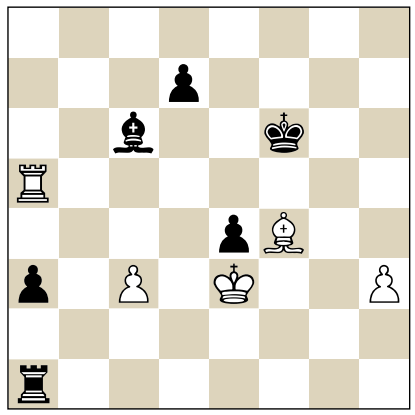
45.♖**c5 fxg5 46.**♗**xg5** Better was taking with the rook, 46.♖xg5.

46...♖**a2+ 47.**♔**e3 a3**



48.♗**f4** The only move. After 48.♖a5 I go 48...♖a1 and advance the pawn to a2, when I will have the winning manoeuvre ...♖h1 followed by ...♖xh3+ and ...♖h2+, picking up the white rook that had to take the pawn on a2.

48...♖**a1 49.**♖**f5+** The only way to stay in the game. **49...**♔**e6 50.**♖**e5+** ♔**f6 51.**♖**a5**



51...d5 This is winning, but even stronger was 51...a2 52.♗e5+ ♔e6 53.c4 ♖h1 to collect another pawn.

52.♔**d4**

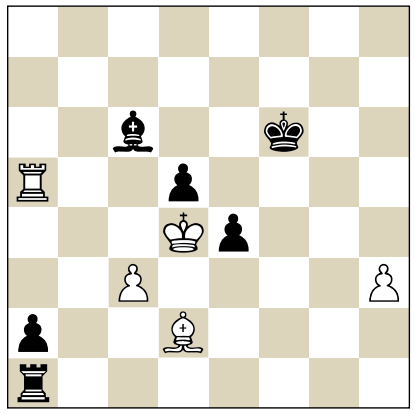
This looked logical to me, but there was a chance for White to play 52.c4 a2 53.cxd5, after which things are not that easy. It seems that I still win after 53...♖e1+ (53...♗xd5 54.♖xd5 ♖e1+ 55.♔f2 a1♕ 56.♗e5+ is a draw) 54.♔f2, and now not 54...a1♕ 55.♖xa1 ♖xa1 56.dxc6 ♖a3, and it's a draw, but

ANASTASIYA KARLOVICH

Ruslan Ponomariov was incredibly unfortunate to lose his game against Teimour Radjabov.

54...♗a4 55.♖xa4 a1♕ 56.♖xa1 ♖xa1, and this endgame is winning.

52...a2 53.♗d2 For a moment it looks as if White is stopping all the advances, but my next move is very strong:

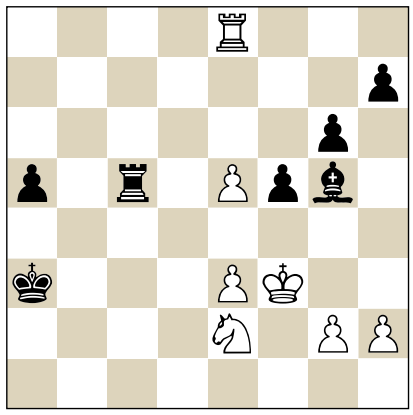


53...♗b5 Black threatens 54...♗c4 and then free the rook on a1 and queen the pawn. **54.♔xd5 ♖d1** Now White loses a piece. **55.♔xe4** As 55.♖xa2 runs into 55...e3. **55...a1♕** and White resigned, because after 56.♖xa1 ♖xa1 57.c4, Black has 57...♖a4 and will be a rook up.

This was my best game in Zug, judged by the quality of the moves.

■ ■ ■

Ruslan Ponomariov, however, kept playing very healthy and solid chess. I was quite impressed when I watched how neatly he exploited his chances against Caruana in a slightly better endgame and how tenaciously he defended a slightly worse game against Hikaru Nakamura. He was incredibly unfortunate to lose his game (and his chances to stay in the race with it) against Radjabov.



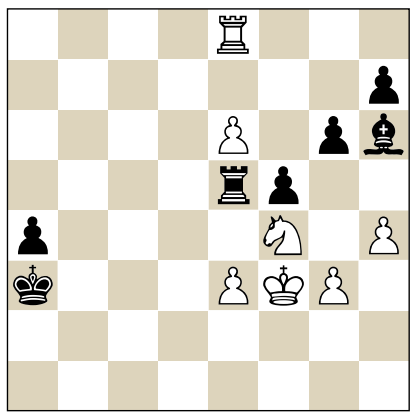
Radjabov-Ponomariov
Zug 2013 (9)
position after 36...♔a3

So far both players had played very healthy, solid and inventive chess. Ruslan spent a lot of time trying to remember the opening lines, whereas Teimour burned a lot of time in the endgame. By this point both players had only seconds to complete the game.

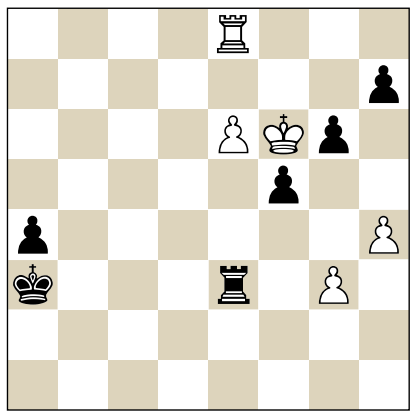
37.g3! I think Teimour spent most of his remaining time on this move, and it's a good one indeed.

37...a4 38.h4 ♗h6 The bishop is somewhat out of the game, but White still has no way to make progress.

39.e6
More or less giving up his ambitions.
39...♖e5 40.♘f4



40...♗xf4??
Played with only seconds on the clock. Ruslan must have assumed that anything was a draw, but now the white king penetrates. And indeed, anything was a draw, anything but this capture. Incredible bad luck, if you ask me.
40...g5 41.hxg5 ♗xg5 was one way to draw, but in fact Black doesn't need to fear anything and can just advance slowly himself: 40...♔a2 41.e7 a3.
41.♔xf4! ♖e4+ 42.♔g5! ♖xe3 43.♔f6



The win is trivial. **43...♖xg3 44.e7 ♖e3 45.♖b8! ♔a2 46.♖b6! ♖xe7 47.♔xe7 a3 48.♔f6 ♔a1 49.♔g7 a2 50.♔xh7 f4 51.♖b3**
Black resigned.

Towards the end of the tournament, the only man who seemed to have a chance to stop the almighty Veselin was Nakamura, who got a turbo boost after the second rest day and kept winning game after game. However, he started his streak a little too late to catch the leader.

As for myself, I never really got into the tournament, wasting my chances too carelessly. A risk-free better endgame against Mamedyarov and a bishop for two pawns against Kamsky were potentially successful games, something that happens to me from time to time. Still, I was pretty satisfied with my adequate handling of the complicated middlegames in those encounters and the unexpected chances passed by even before I realized they had appeared.

As dull as my play seemed, there was some bright side to it as well. I don't think there was another guy in Zug who can claim to have sacrificed two full rooks in two consecutive games. Here is the second one.

NOTES BY
Anish Giri

EO 42.9 – A34
Anish Giri
Rustam Kasimdzhanov
Zug 2013 (9)

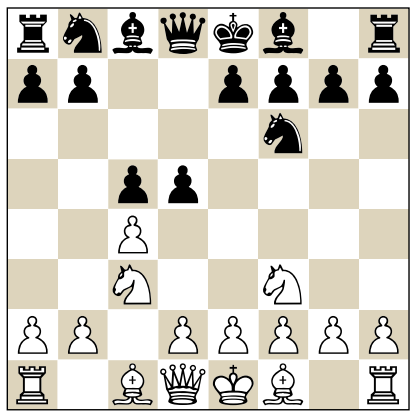
To be honest, I was pretty inspired to finish well in the event, especially since I had the appropriate pairing, with two white games in a row in Rounds 9 and 10 and playing Kasimdzhanov and Leko, neither of whom seemed to be having their best tournament. On the rest day I decided to go for a slow positional game, hoping to use my youth and energy somewhere towards the end. Little did I know...

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 c5

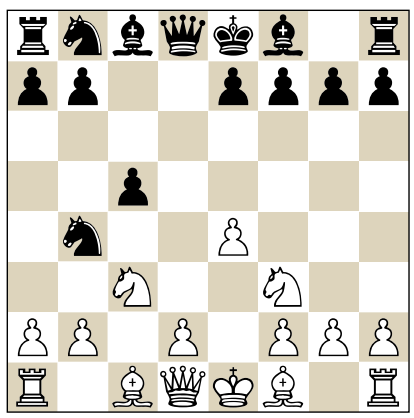
I expected Rustam to stick to his Queen's Gambit, but being a Grünfeld player and having a constant headache about the Anti-Grünfeld, I have recently become quite familiar with the Symmetrical English as well.

3.♘c3 d5

I had played this way against Ragger in the Bundesliga, and later in the tournament Kamsky tested me here again.



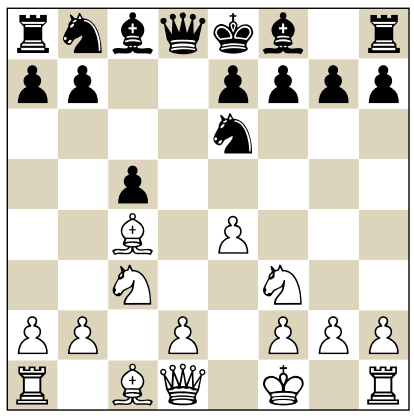
4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 The most critical and ambitious way. It took me a while to figure out the right set-up for Black and so I decided to see how up-to-date Rustam was. **5...♘b4**



6.♗c4 6.♗b5+ has been analysed thoroughly and seems to lead to a draw after 6...♘8c6 7.d4 cxd4 8.a3 dxc3 9.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 10.axb4 cxb2 11.♗xb2, and White has nice compensation, but the way to equalize for Black is no longer a secret.

6...♘d3+ 7.♔e2 ♘f4+ 8.♔f1 ♘e6

The good old move. 8...♘d3!? is further evidence that I talk too much to my colleagues. Fabiano Caruana didn't hesitate to introduce this novelty of mine in the Russian League just a week after I found it.

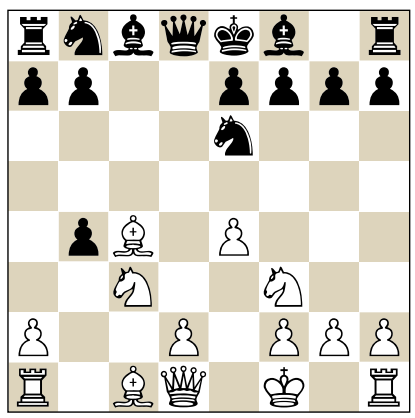


9.b4

The way to fight for the advantage. Now White gives Black a choice: to be a pawn up and lag behind in development, or to be a pawn down and be ahead.

9...cxb4

Here 9...g6 10.bxc5 ♗g7 is usually met by 11.♗xe6 ♗xe6 12.d4, and Black will need to come up with something brilliant to prove that he has compensation for White's powerful centre.



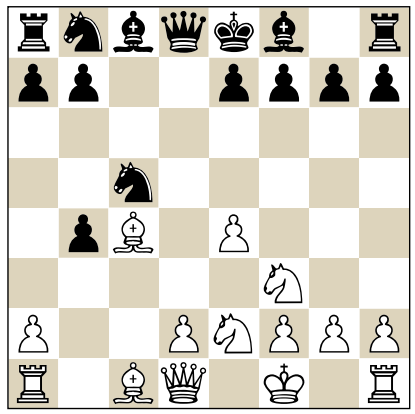
10.♘e2!

10.♘d5 attracted me less in view of 10...g6 11.♗b2 ♗g7, when Black has an easy development.

10...♘c5!?

This rare, yet logical move took me by surprise.

10...♘c7 was the move I looked at while trying to figure out how Black should play. White continues in straightforward fashion with 11.d4 e6 12.h4!.



11.♘g3?

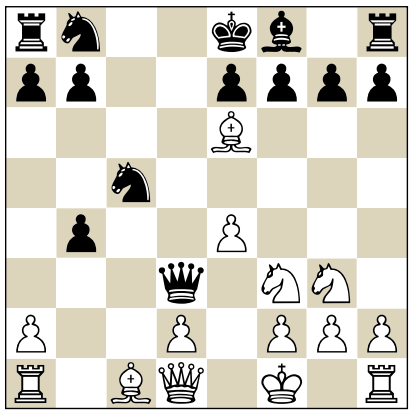
This move felt somewhat loose, but I quickly convinced myself that I should develop my pieces instead of putting the queen on the open file. The move is pretty much wrong any

way I look at it, as it, for example, also takes away the g3-square from the pawn, which can be useful in case of a g3/♔g2 regrouping.
11.♕c2 is the way to play (and in fact I wanted to make the move instantly, but then the move in the game caught my attention): 11...e6 12.d4 ♘cd7, and here perhaps the same 13.h4!? makes sense.

11...♗e6!?

Not giving me any time for d4. Although White's position doesn't seem that attractive anymore, I did stay extremely optimistic.

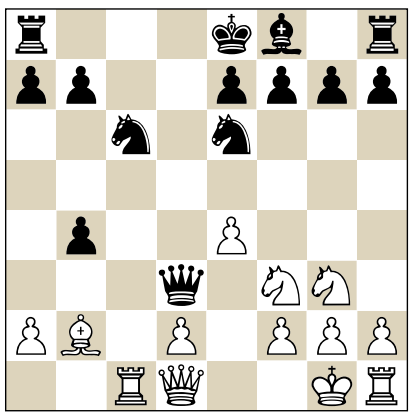
12.♗xe6 ♕d3+



13.♔g1

I was full of ambition and hope that I would eventually get my coordination back by means of h4 and then either h5/♖h4 or ♔h2/♖e1.
13.♕e2 is maybe enough to equalize, but it's pretty sad to go for: 13...♕xe2+ 14.♔xe2 ♘xe6 15.d4 followed by a3, but a pawn is a pawn.

13...♘xe6 14.♗b2 ♘c6 15.♖c1



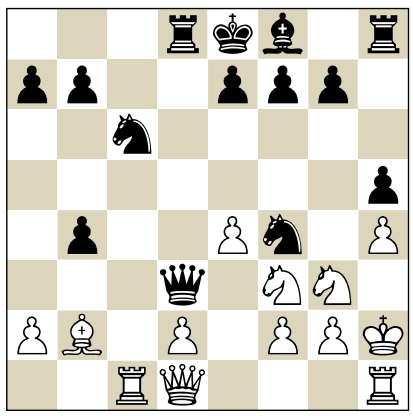
15...♖d8

Rustam criticized this move as being too slow, but in fact it's pretty decent.
16...f6 17.♘e1 was what Rustam claimed to be the correct way. While I was sure there would be something for White and he was absolutely convinced that White was busted, the truth is somewhere in the middle. Black is better but White still has some compensation.

> 'I decided to go for a slow positional game, hoping to use my youth and energy somewhere towards the end. Little did I know...'

16.h4 h5 17.♔h2 ♘f4

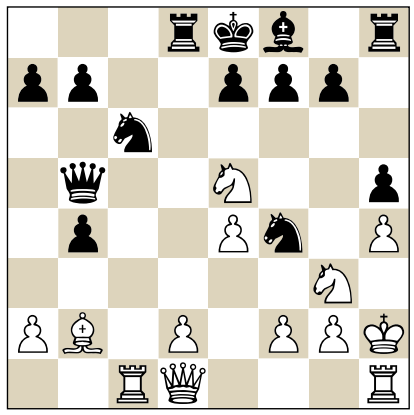
A good move, although during the game I thought that the knight was not going to get to his destination on d3 so easily.
17...♕a6 is met by 18.d4!.



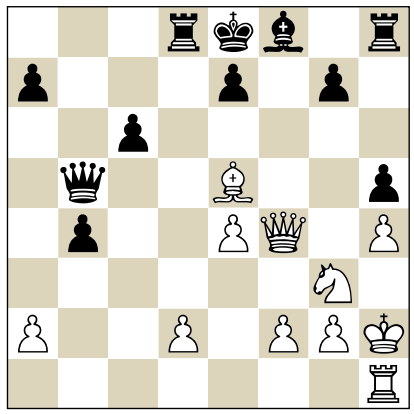
18.♘e5!

The only move to fight for something else than a clearly worse position.

18...♕b5 I must admit I had missed this nice retreat, but then again I immediately saw the exchange sacrifice and saw no reasons to be sad.
18...♕a6!? may be even more precise. While Rustam was thinking, I was pleased with the fact that both 18...♕xd2 and 18...♘xe5 were bad for Black. Incredible how my mood can fool me.



19.♖xc6! bxc6 20.♕f3 f6 21.♕xf4 fxe5 22.♗xe5 Here I was very happy with my position, seeing the holes and the undeveloped black pieces. Well, in my defence, I am just a little worse ☺.



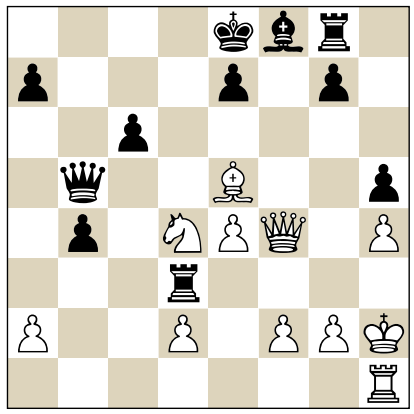
22...♖d3! 23.♘f5

I saw no other way to create an initiative, so I quickly went forward.

23...♖g8

I was a little embarrassed to have missed this move, as I was mainly focusing on 23...♖h7. Now I noticed that after the simple 24.♖c1 there will be 24...g6! 25.♘d4 ♗h6!, so I took no time to play my next move either.

24.♘d4

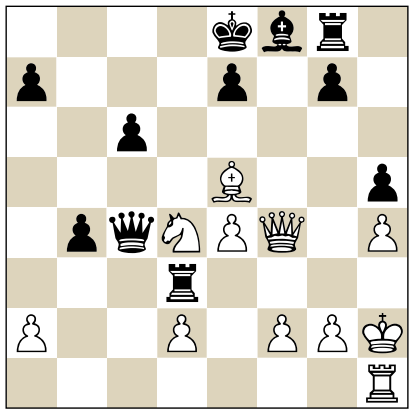


24...♕c4!

And only here did I realize that after the planned 25.♘b3 Black will

switch the queen to the kingside with 25...♕f7!.

Finally I was confronted with the harsh reality: White is clearly worse. Trying to find some miraculous perpetual after 25.♕f5 ♖xd4, I realized that the only way to fight on was to go back with the knight and hope for a successful defence in a worse position. Spending more and more time on trying to find a miracle I finally convinced myself that I had found one:

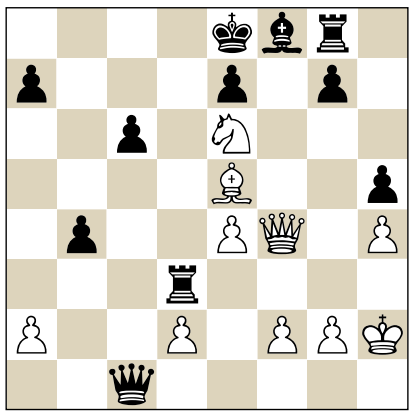


25.♖c1!!??

I think the move deserves one exclam for just having been considered, and one more for having actually been executed; the remaining marks are for its actual quality.

25...♕xc1 26.♘e6

Finally, at the cost of two rooks, I have established my knight where I want to have it. Unfortunately, however, my investment also had a little downside. I am a rook and an exchange down.

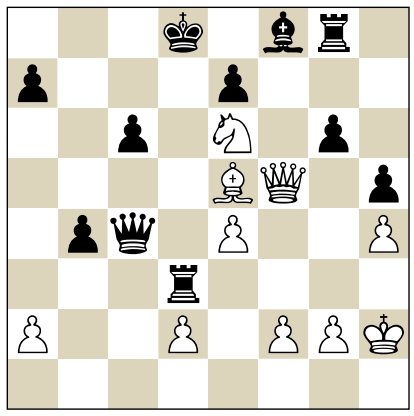


26...♕c4 Also better for Black is 26...♖d7 27.♗b2!! ♕xd2! 28.♘c7+ ♔d8 29.♘e6+ ♔c8 30.♕f7 ♖d8!, but it's possible to miss this line.

27.♕f5

Caruana later told me that when he saw this position he thought: wow, how did White manage to get his knight to e6? It took him a while to count the rooks.

27...g6 28.♘c7+ ♔d8 29.♘e6+

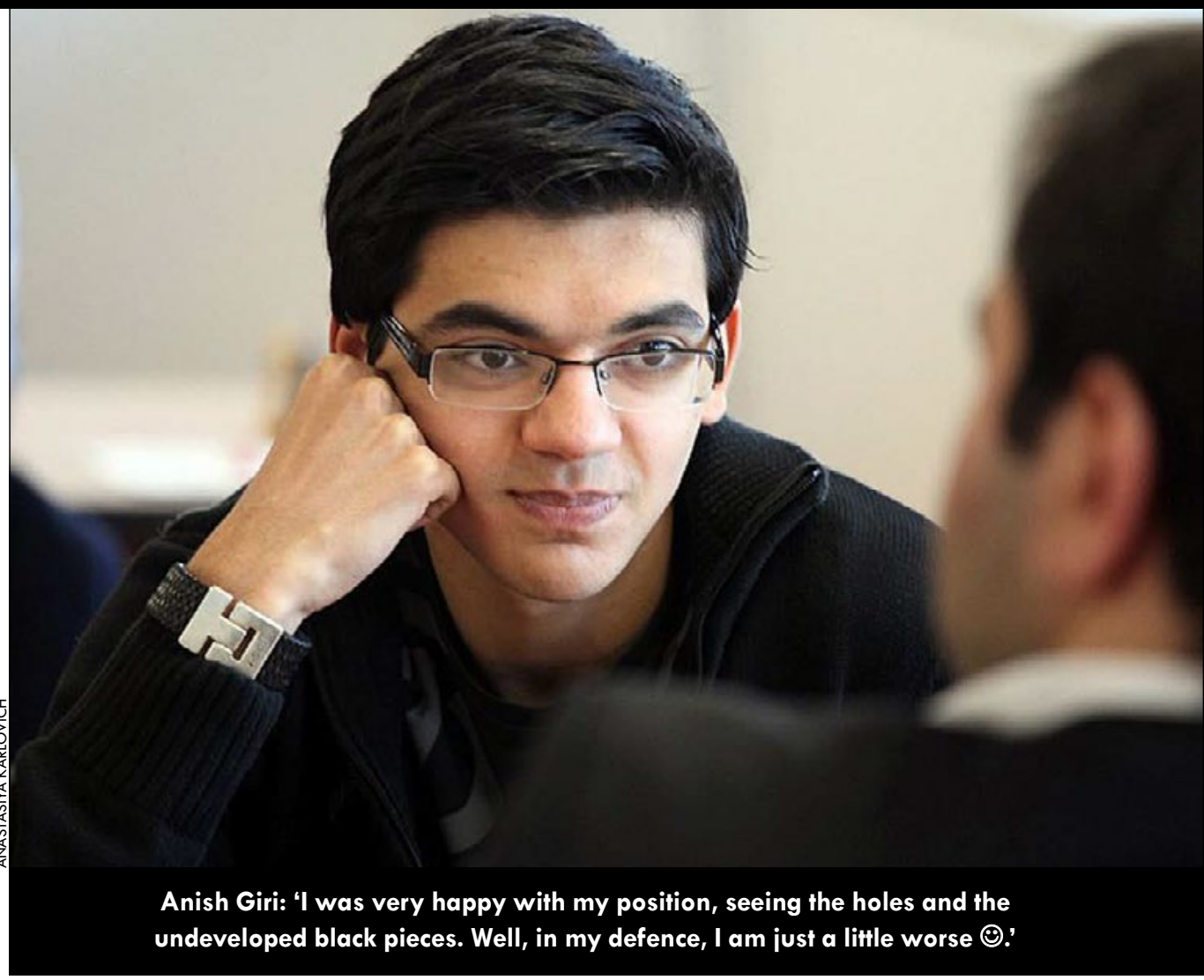


29...♔d7!

I had some hallucination and thought that a double check would save me here. In fact, White is pretty much lost. Instead, 29...♔c8 was indeed bad for Black, as I rightly saw: 30.♕f7!, and it is Black who has to start worrying here: 30...♖d8 31.♕xg8 ♕xe4 32.d4 ♕f5 33.f3 a5.

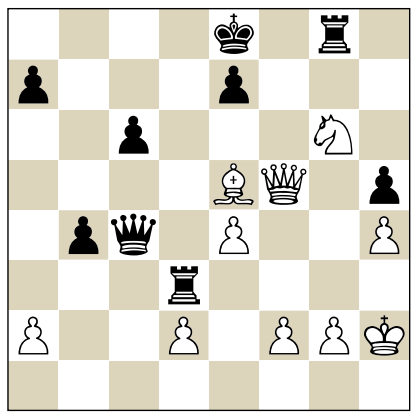
30.♘xf8+ ♔e8 31.♘xg6

I actually wasn't feeling that hopeless, as I saw that 31...♖xg6, the most obvious move, wouldn't win the game. Apart from that, Rustam had too little time left to be feeling too comfortable.

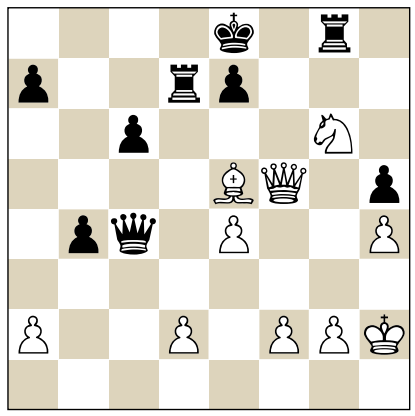


ANASTASIYA KARLOVICH

Anish Giri: 'I was very happy with my position, seeing the holes and the undeveloped black pieces. Well, in my defence, I am just a little worse ☺.'



31...♖d7 Missing my defensive idea, which nevertheless is still not enough. 31...♖d8! wins the game on the spot.

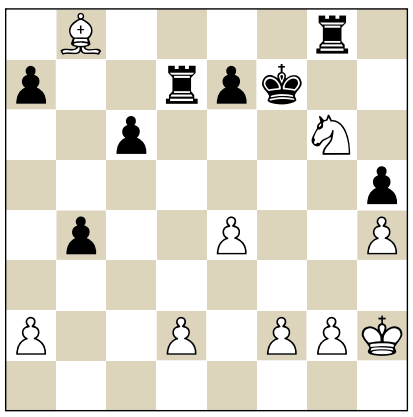


32.♗b8!? The best practical try. The right way to execute my idea was 32.♗d4!!.

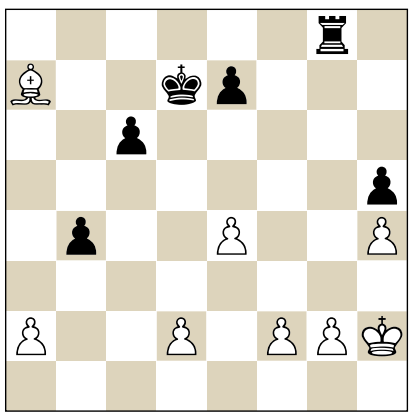
32...♕f7 I had no doubts that we would get the following endgame. It seemed like a compromise to me. I

had played badly, but creatively, so I felt like I did deserve a disgusting endgame with some drawing chances.
32...e6! was too hard to spot, considering that Rustam had barely a couple of minutes left: 33.♕xh5 ♕xe4, and the mate on g2 is a crucial motif.

33.♕xf7+ ♔xf7

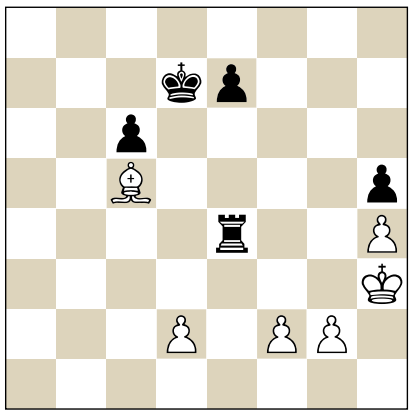


34.♘e5+ ♔e6 35.♘xd7 ♔xd7 36.♗xa7



36...♖a8? There was no time for subtleties. 36...e5! seems to be winning: 37.♗c5 ♖b8, when even the desperate 38.g4! doesn't help: 38...♖b5 39.♗f8 hxg4 40.h5 ♔e8! (winning an important tempo) 41.♗d6 c5!, and Black gets a passed pawn.

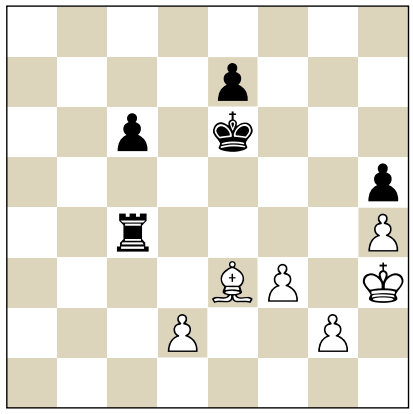
37.♗c5 ♖xa2 38.♗xb4 ♖a4 39.♗c5 ♖xe4 40.♔h3



40...♔e6

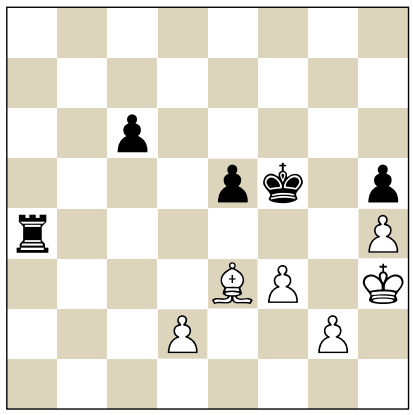
The right move was 40...♖e1! 41.g3 ♔e6 42.♗e3 ♔f5 43.f3 ♖h1+ 44.♔g2 ♖a1 45.♔h3 ♖a4, which leads to a similar position as in the game, but here I have played g3. Such little details can be of importance in an endgame as subtle and complex as this one.

41.f3 ♖c4 42.♗e3



White's problem is that I have no time to get in g4, which would secure a draw. Now the question is whether Black will ever manage to play ...e5-e4 without allowing g4. I was thinking for a very long time, trying to find a passive set-up which would lead to a draw (for example, imagine ...e5-e4 by Black and White having his king on e2 and his bishop on g5). My problem was that first of all, once Black manages ...e4, he will wait a long time before taking on f3. Secondly, the c-pawn will run to c4 and eventually White risks the black king coming around, when the sacrifice on d2 will decide the game.
My final conclusion was that I would try to wait for ...e4 and then go g4+ and see what happens.

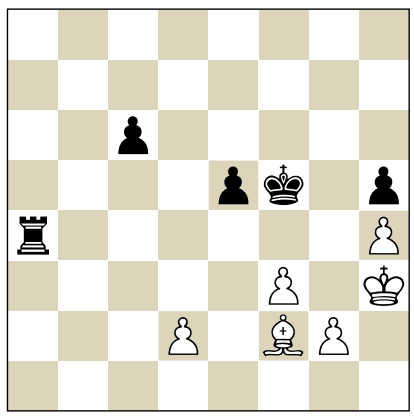
42...♔f5 43.♗g5 e5 44.♗e3 ♖a4!



The zugzwang that bothered me the most.

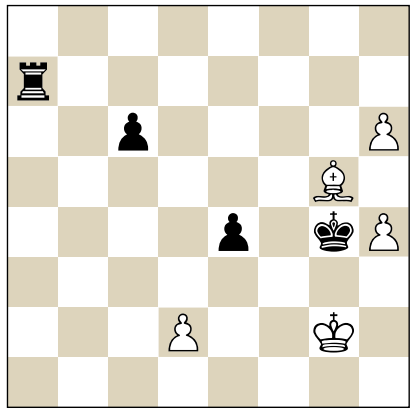
45.♗f2

It took me a long time to decide where to put the bishop. After long calculations I came to the conclusion that I needed to prevent the ...c5-c4 advance at all cost. Now the problem, however, is that after g4+ Black will have ...♔f4. After 45.♗g5 c5 46.♗e3 c4 47.g4+ hxg4+ 48.fxg4+ ♔e4 the fact that I will have to waste one more move before pushing my pawns, due to the threat of ...c3, convinced me that Black is totally winning here.



45...♖c4

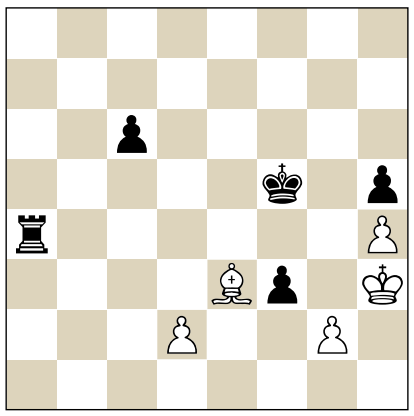
The critical try was 45...e4!, and now:
– 46.g4+ was the move I intended, but it seems that there was a flaw in my calculations: 46...♔f4 47.♗e3+ ♔xf3 48.gxh5 ♖a1! 49.♔h2 ♔g4 50.h6 ♖a5! 51.♗g5 ♖a7! 52.♔g2



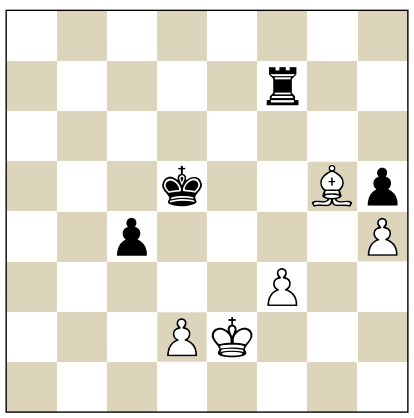
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

52...♖f7! (cutting off the king and eventually Black will win via zugzwang) 53.♔h2 c5 54.♔g2 c4 55.♔h2 ♔h5 56.♔g2 ♔g6 57.♔h2 ♖f3 58.♔g2 ♔h7 59.♔h2 c3 60.dxc3 e3.
– Maybe the passive way, 46.♗e3!,

is after all not that bad: 46...exf3 (46...♔g6 doesn't seem to change much, while 46...♔e6 allows g4!)



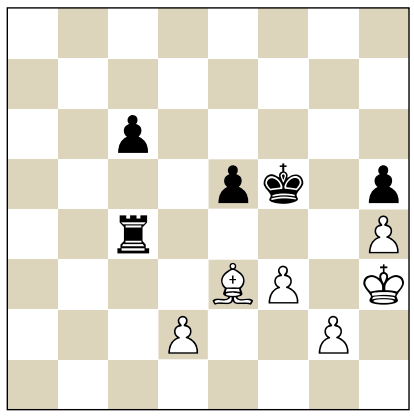
47.gxf3 (as I already said, I was pretty disgusted with this, but it doesn't seem easy for Black to break through) 47...♖c4 48.♗g5 ♔e5 49.♗e3 c5 50.♔g3 ♖c2 51.♔f2 c4 52.♔e2 ♖a2 53.♗h6 ♖a7 54.♗g5 ♔d5 55.♗f6 ♖f7 56.♗g5,



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

and now Black has to be clever (if there is a possibility to win at all) as the long route – ...♔c5-b5-a4-b3-c2 – will be too slow because White will get counterplay with the f-pawn.

46.♗e3



46...c5?

Now it appears to be a trivial draw. Summing up the evaluation of this endgame depends on the position arising after ...e4 and ...exf3 gxf3. My initial fears are understandable, but perhaps the position is not lost. Black will need an incredibly clever resource in order to get his king close to the d2-pawn without allowing the white f-pawn to run, and I must say I don't see what that resource is.

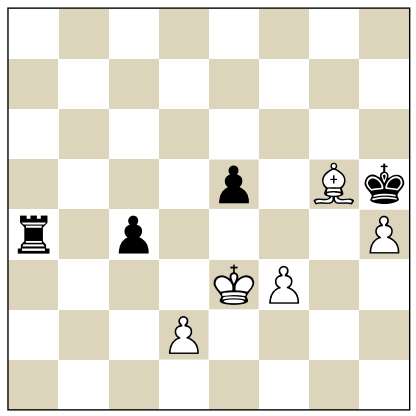
47.g4+!

Rustam was occupied by deep thoughts and confessed that he had missed this simple move.

47...♔g6

Instead, 47...hxg4+ 48.fxg4+ ♖xg4 49.♗xc5 is also just a draw.

48.♔g3 ♖c1 49.♔f2 c4 50.♗g5 ♖a1 51.♔e3 ♖e1+ 52.♔f2 ♖a1 53.♔e3 ♖a4 54.gxh5+ ♔xh5



55.♗f6!

It's easy to make the most exact move in such a position.

55...♖a3+ 56.♔e4 c3 57.dxc3 ♖xc3 58.♗xe5 ♖xf3 59.♔xf3 ♔xh4

Draw.

A game full of fight and twists and turns and certainly a lucky escape for me. It seems I was rewarded for trying to stay as optimistic and as ignorant as possible.

> 'I want to warn all my future opponents that I do plan to win one game in the on-going Grand Prix cycle.'

Finally, I should congratulate Veselin Topalov on his impressive performance. The best way to describe it would be the comment (and high praise) that I saw somewhere on the Internet under yet another game that Topalov won in Zug: 'Wow. Does anyone know what is his score with Carlsen?'

And before I forget, I want to warn all my future opponents that I do plan to win one game in the on-going Grand Prix cycle, so they'd better be ready. ■

Zug 2013 — **cat. XXI**

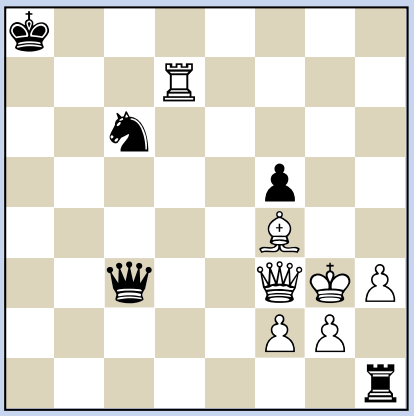
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		TPR
1	Veselin Topalov	IGM	BUL	2771	*	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	½	8	2929
2	Hikaru Nakamura	IGM	USA	2767	0	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	6½	2820
3	Ruslan Ponomariov	IGM	UKR	2733	½	½	*	1	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	6	2794
4	Fabiano Caruana	IGM	ITA	2772	0	½	0	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	6	2790
5	Gata Kamsky	IGM	USA	2741	½	½	0	0	*	1	½	½	1	1	½	0	5½	2757
6	Alexander Morozevich	IGM	RUS	2758	0	0	½	½	0	*	1	½	½	1	½	1	5½	2755
7	Anish Giri	IGM	NED	2727	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	½	5	2722
8	Peter Leko	IGM	HUN	2744	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	5	2721
9	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	RUS	2786	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	5	2717
10	Teimour Radjabov	IGM	AZE	2793	½	½	1	0	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	4½	2687
11	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	IGM	AZE	2766	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	4½	2690
12	Rustam Kasimdzhanov	IGM	UZB	2709	½	0	½	0	1	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	4½	2695

Yochanan Afek

Beware: Brilliancy!

Oversights are part of the practice of each and everyone of us. A great majority of them bear no special interest beyond the obvious lesson to avoid repeating them. Surprisingly, all six desperate looking positions below could have been saved. Would you miss those brilliant opportunities?

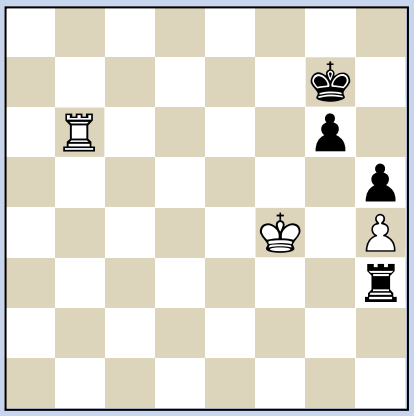
★☆☆☆☆



1. Black to move and draw

White has just played 42.♕h5-f3 and Black resigned. What could be more natural?

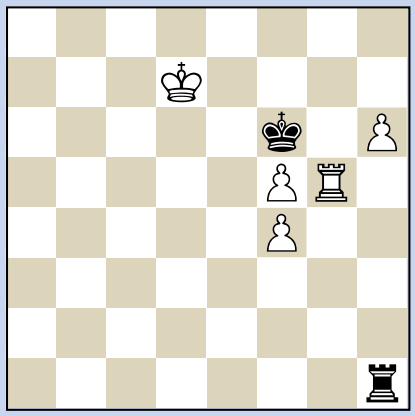
★★☆☆☆



2. White to move and draw

In this seemingly hopeless situation White desperately continued 1.♖b7+, and indeed soon lost following 1...♔h6 2.♖b6 ♖xh4+. Any feeling of déjà vu?

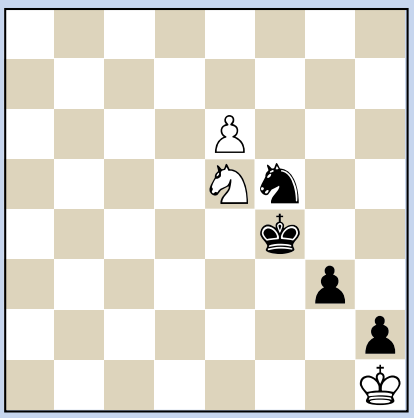
★★★☆☆



3. Black to move and draw

With a considerable material deficit Black still hoped for a drawish rook ending with f- and h- pawns: **79...♔f7 80.♖g7+ ♔f6 81.♔e8! ♔xf5 82.♖f7+ ♔g6 83.h7 ♖a1 84.f5+ ♔g5 85.♔f8** and Black resigned. Was there a safe way out in the diagrammed position?

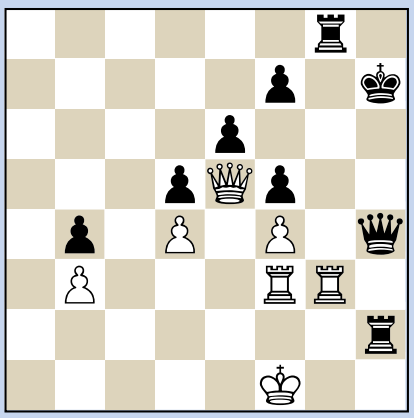
★★★☆☆



4. White to move and draw

In mutual time-trouble White rushed in with **79.♘g6**, narrowly escaping after **79...♔f3??** 79...♔g4! would have won! **80.♘e5+ ♔f2 81.♘g4+ ♔f3 82.♘xh2+ gxh2 83.♔xh2 ♔f4** draw. Could he hold his own without needing that favour?

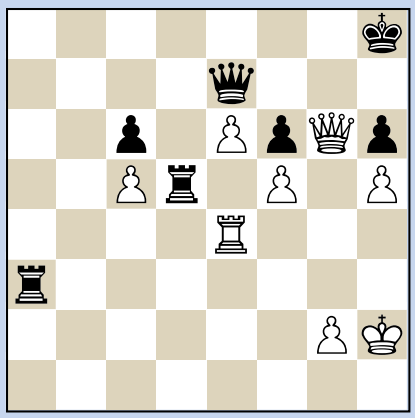
★★★☆☆



5. White to move and draw

Facing heavy threats against his exposed monarch, White withdrew his queen, **42.♕e3**, but **42...♖a8 43.♖g7+ ♔h6** proved too much to cope with. Could White defend more effectively?

★★★★☆



6. Black to move and draw

White's move **39.♖g4** looks lethal, and indeed after the seemingly forced follow-up **39...♕f8 40.e7 ♕b8+ 41.g3??** (41.♖g3!) Black resigned. In fact, those natural decisions of *both* players on move 39 were wrong altogether.

The number of stars roughly indicates their estimated level of difficulty: 1 is easiest and 5 most difficult. **Solutions on page 55**

Veselin Topalov: ‘If you want to be World Champion, you don’t have to be the strongest player; you just have to win the world championship’

With a clear victory in the Zug Grand Prix, Veselin Topalov took the lead in the overall GP standings and catapulted himself to fourth place in the world rankings. The lean years that followed his loss in the 2010 World Championship match against Vishy Anand in Sofia seem to belong to the past. The Bulgarian former World Champion has set his sights on the next Candidates’ tournament and has the ambition to chase the highest title again. **Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam** meets a fighter who has seen it all and wants to see more. ‘I suspect I still have some years ahead, but it depends on me.’

The last time I sat down with Veselin Topalov for a longer talk, he told me he was ‘a little bit sick of chess’. He had good reason to have that feeling. In the café of the Grand Hotel Sofia in the centre of the capital of his native Bulgaria, we looked back on the 2010 match for the World Championship against Vishy Anand that he had

Veselin Topalov: 'I don't get excited even when it gets really important. Of course, it's better to win than to lose, but it doesn't affect my life.'

just lost in a highly dramatic final game. With the score level, Topalov had gone out of his way to squeeze something from an unpromising position and, taking irresponsible risks, he had gone down in flames. His explanation for his reckless play was that he had felt he had to decide the match there and then, as he believed his chances in a rapid play-off against Anand would be negligible.

At the time he said he was going to take a break, which he had been planning regardless of the result, and that was what he did. After the end of the match, in the middle of May, Topalov didn't play for more than four months. Occasionally he would follow events on the Internet, but his interest was low. In the summer he had his traditional beach holiday in Bulgaria, and then there were preparations for his wedding in September. He returned to competitive chess at the Olympiad in Khanty-Mansiysk and the Pearl Spring tournament in Nanjing at the end of 2010. His play was no longer as forbidding as it had been and besides wins there were losses. 'I had accumulated a lot of knowledge and I thought this was enough, but I was totally off form and that led to my bad results.'

Playing fewer competitions than ever, he continued to shed rating points here and there and even dropped out of the Top-10. Before he began his rise to the very best again he hit rock bottom with a 'modest' 2751 rating in October last year, which meant 13th place in the world rankings.

It's always easier to speak about low points in a career when those difficult days belong to the past. That seems to be the case when we talk about the lean years after the Anand match at the Quality Hotel Residence in Sandnes on the first free day of Norway Chess 2013. The day before Topalov lost against Vishy Anand(!), his first defeat in seven months since his loss against Pavel Eljanov at the European Club Cup last October. The rating points he assembled in those months have taken him back to 4th place in the world rankings. His current 2793 rating is only 20 points shy of his peak, the 2813 with which he was number one in the world in 2006 and 2009.

From that talk in Sofia I not only vividly remember his 'I'm a little bit sick of chess' before he ordered an espresso, but also his ultra-sober reaction to the lost match. As if he had just lost a game of tic-tac-toe, he opined, seemingly emotionless, 'sometimes you win, sometimes you lose'. Apparently, this is still how he sees it.

'What can you do? It's over. There is no point of return. I'm the kind of person that tries to look ahead in life. What can I change? That was it. This is the way I see it. At the beginning of my career I was taking things really seriously. Like all these young players. They count their results, my score against this guy is plus-one, my score against that guy minus-one. I no longer do that. I mean, it's just a game of chess. I don't get excited even when it gets really important. Of course it's better to win than to lose, but it doesn't affect my life. I'm no longer getting as crazy or emotional as before. I lost important games in my life and of course I also won them, and at some point I just realized that it makes no sense to get nervous. It only makes you play worse. So now I am relaxed, I take it philosophically. Just play, try to do your best and if it works, great, and if not, next time.

'Yes, it's some sort of maturity, something that comes with the years. For me, honestly, one of the biggest disappointments was Libya (the FIDE knock-out World Championship in 2004, where he reached the semi-finals having scored 9½ from 10 in the first five rounds – DJtG). I was really playing well and it looked as if everything was going my way. But then I lost this rapid play-off against Kasimdzhanov (after all four classical games had been drawn – DJtG). That was a real disappointment. Because for me it's not only that I want to win, but when I am in top form, I try to crush the opposition. In Libya everything was going my way. I was lucky, my strongest opponents were being knocked out by others that were supposed to be less dangerous for me. And even then I didn't win. I had really trained hard and I felt that everything was over. Then the next year everything changed in FIDE and (the World Championship tournament in) San Luis happened. But I thought that Libya was my last chance.'

Didn't you think that maybe you had invested too much energy in those first 10 games? There was no need to win all of them.

'No, actually I liked the way I had prepared. I did everything the correct way. I really like trying to play as if it is your last game, really giving 100 per cent. And training to really go for it. Yeah, totally maximalist, especially for Libya. Because I was ranked number one. With the opponents in the list I didn't think I was inferior to anyone. I saw it as a clear shot at the title, if you see Libya as a world championship.'

What surprised me is that when you had that tremendous start in San Luis the next year, scoring 6½ from 7 in the first half, people reacted as if you'd been walking on water. Apparently they had forgotten your 9½ from 10 in Tripoli.

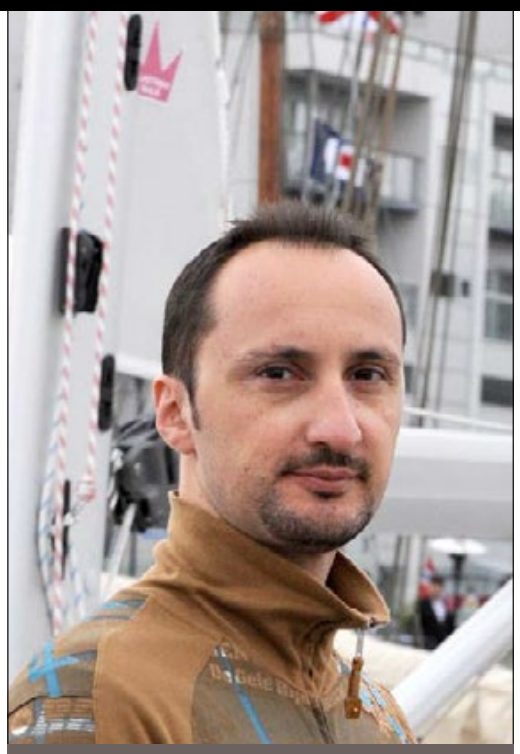
'Well, but knock-out is different. I was winning games with the black pieces in the first rounds and then when I was White my opponents were trying to beat me, so it was kind of easier. But in San Luis, what I think happened... I remember when I already had a very big plus and then I played Judit (Polgar) with black. I told myself this is not the moment to play the Najdorf, let's go for the Berlin, something solid. And already on move 20 or so she dropped a pawn and... Even when I tried to be solid, even then it worked.'

You say, if you see Libya as a world championship. Today there are still people that don't see San Luis as a world championship. Is that something that bothers you?

'Actually, it's something I totally don't understand. I mean, if you don't see San

Luis as a world championship, then you should not see Mexico 2007 as a world championship. There is absolutely no difference. It's an old issue. For some reason in the history of chess, champions were given too many rights. I think Magnus is right in this respect. And it was wrong. It is obvious that the situation we have is correct. The international chess federation decides where is the world championship and who is World Champion. It's not journalists or the very champion who decide that, as it was in the past. This was just the wrong approach and the wrong way of seeing it. It cannot be that journalists decide who is the World Champion. It is obvious that it has to be FIDE. It is another story that FIDE is far from perfect, but this is better than when you have a title that belongs to the champion. That would be a real disaster, I think. It leads to abuse of power, as we have seen in the past.'

Apart from winning San Luis, you have also been number one in the world rankings for a considerable time. What was more important for you, to top the rating list or to win San Luis?
'There is a clear disproportion. Obviously it is better to have the title, financially speaking. You see now that Magnus has around a hundred points more than Anand, but Anand was making more money because of the world championship matches. After Libya I became number three and then one year later Kasparov retired, in March 2005. Then I saw a possibility to become number one. With Kasparov still around this had not looked realistic to me for some reason. He was not as strong as in 1999 or 2000, but he was still a steady number one. I had a bad score against Garry and of course he had a better rating. That was a psychological barrier, but I thought that with the others, they're good, but they're not unbeatable or impossible to fight against. Honestly speaking, I didn't think that I was very much inferior to Anand. We were exchanging wins. I lost sometimes, but I also had big wins.



'It cannot be that journalists decide who is the World Champion.'

Like I beat Kramnik in 20 moves with black in Wijk aan Zee (in 2005).'

The first tournaments you played after the post-Sofia break were hesitant steps to find your way again. Were you relaxed about that? Did you have a plan?
'I still had 2800 something and it was like I felt, I have this rating, but I don't really need it, because I was in the next Candidates already. I was also getting invitations, and the feeling was that I could always come back. But of course it's not that easy. I dropped something like 50 points and I didn't really care. But what I was worried about was that I started to forget things, especially in the openings. I was taking some very strange decisions, a real lack of concentration. Strange things. Even when I was training it was different. I couldn't concentrate the same way. I still thought, you do this and this and it will come back. But top form doesn't stay forever. Or even the advantage you have in opening preparation. It was gone. Between 2005 and let's say 2008 I was really showing many ideas in the opening. Then, after 2008, I don't think I had such an advantage anymore. It was still OK, but no better than the others.'

At the time you said, it's my privilege that I can decline invitations, I can pick my tournaments. Did you ever, around that time, consider quitting?
'Oh, no, no. No. Why should I? Because I don't really have a second option. I am good with the knife in the kitchen, I am good at cutting things. My wife told me I should be a butcher. So maybe that's the only option I have (laughs). There are not really many alternatives. And I am fairly young and still enjoying it.'

That's what I was wondering about when I saw you in Khanty-Mansiysk and Nanjing in 2010, whether you were still enjoying playing.
'The Olympiad was OK, but I also have to do it, of course. To Nanjing I went with my brother and my wife, we had a nice time. The thing is that now I prefer events that don't take too long, one-week events such as my rapid match against Paco Vallejo or (the world rapid and blitz in) Astana. After 10 days I get a bit bored and want the tournament to finish.'

You're philosophical about results. Was that your salvation when you had these lesser results?
'Yeah, I mean... Of course you have more and more players that are well prepared. They work really professionally. So the competition is growing and it's not so easy to be even in the top 10.'

Magnus Carlsen has set a trend by putting less emphasis on opening preparation and working hard at the board. For you, opening preparation was always very important, but you were also a very hard worker at the board.
'Well, but I don't think anybody can do what Magnus does. It looks easy, but it's not. Now in Switzerland, for the first time in many years, I scored a good result without any real opening advantages. I was not getting good positions and still I got a good result; it was very tough. It looked easy, but actually I was

NEW

ARE YOU A KING, A MAX, OR A PRO ?

Chess King is the **top selling** PC chess software program that will help you improve at chess. It's **complete** with all the best and up-to-date tools, and it's **easy to use** for all levels. Play, learn, analyze, prepare for your opponent, store your games and share them with the world. Now in three versions, **Chess King 2 with Houdini 2**, and the even more powerful **Chess King 3 Max with Houdini 3, or Chess King 3 Pro with Houdini 3 Pro**. It's all you need in super affordable packages.

CHESS KING 2

New, complete and most affordable!

- Grandmaster engine Houdini 2 included
- GigaKing Database of 5+ million games (updated to April 2013, free games all 2013)
- Classical, random, puzzle and quest modes
- Works with all versions of Windows incl. 8
- World Version ENG, FRE, SPA, GER, RUS

CHESS KING 3 MAX

Now with Houdini 3 world's top engine!

- Houdini 3 supports up to 6 cores
- Full Chess960 support
- Other features as Chess King 2

CHESS KING 3 PRO

Most powerful version!

- Includes Houdini 3 Pro, supports up to 32 cores, 256 GB of hash memory and NUMA-architechture
- Maximum playing and analysis power available

IMMEDIATE DOWNLOADS on www.chess-king.com

- Download Chess King 2 **€34^{95}**
- Download Chess King 3 Max **€59^{95}**
- Download Chess King 3 Pro **€79^{95}**

- Upgrades available from €19^{95} on www.chess-king.com/shop

To order or for more info:
WWW.CHESS-KING.COM

Also on sale at:
www.chessok.com
www.newinchess.com

Veselin Topalov and Silvio Danailov at Kongeparken, an amusement park where the players of Norway Chess visited a junior tournament. In the middle Topalov's second Romain Edouard.

lucky in some games and especially in the beginning I had to defend some really tough positions.'

Was that a clear sign that you're coming back, that you can fight again?
'I hope so, but it's only one tournament. And plus-5 was really too much for what I showed. In the last round I wasn't playing for a win, of course. I was trying to secure first place and make a draw, but Sergey (Karjakin) pushed too hard. It's still a bit too early to say, and also my ambition is not to be among the top 3 or 4 but to fight for more again. It's too early to speak and I don't think I am back at the same level.'

If I look at your results of the past few years, I see many blank spaces, many months that you didn't play. And now there was the London GP, where you shared first place and you win Zug. And as in Bucharest last November, you didn't lose a single game.
'Yeah, this is what makes me happy; that I am more in control again. But it was also luck, because in Zug I was in great danger in several games. And yesterday I lost, so the record is kind of broken. But in general I started to lose less. I don't know why. Another thing is that the level I am playing at now is not as high as it used to be. It's one thing to play Linares and the Candidates' matches and another to play the Grand Prix. That is a lower level.'

Do you have a plan? A next goal?
'Yes, I do have one now. I didn't have one a month ago, but now I am close to qualifying (for the Candidates' tournament), I hope, and the moment this is secured I will start to think about the Candidates', which will be the next step and the next level; my next goal. I was travelling in Argentina and Ireland and only saw the games from London (the Candidates' tournament – DJtG), but I didn't closely analyse them. But some of the guys that played in London I will probably meet if I qualify. People change; they change their openings, they even change their style of playing sometimes. So you have to update yourself and it's really a lot of work when you have to take a closer look at every game.'

Here you made a relatively easy draw against Carlsen. How do you see him? Is he ahead of the others?
'Actually I like his attitude a lot. I had the same mentality. This was the essence of the Sofia Rules; that you have to think about your next move. You don't have to think whether you should offer a draw or accept it. It really makes you stronger as a player if you simply think what is your next move. You don't even think about if you're worse or better. Simply just what is my move? This is what he is doing and this is the correct approach, and this is why he has these results. It cannot be an accident. I had the same mentality, but he is also younger. And of course his style is different.'

Do you also see him as a challenge? Does it inspire you to want to fight for the highest title again now that there's a new guy around?
'Actually, I don't see it this way. If you really want to fight for the world title, it doesn't matter who your opponent will be. It should not stop you that he is now close to 2800 something, close to 2900. You shouldn't think like this. If you want to be World Champion, you don't have to be the strongest, you just have to win the world championship. As you see, Magnus won everything, but imagine he came second in London; that would be the end. You win 10 tournaments in a row and then you don't win London. You may be the strongest player, but you are not going to play the world championship match. This was also Kasparov's fault. He gave many interviews in which he created the impression that you have to be the best in order to be World Champion. In fact, to be World Champion, the only thing you have to do is win the world championship. And who is the best is sometimes even subjective.'

Do you think the upcoming world championship match is going to be more difficult for Carlsen than he thinks?
'I don't know what he thinks. World championship matches are always difficult. I faced it when I played Kamsky in the Candidates' final. I was in top form, I had almost a hundred points more, but when your opponent has

three seconds that are close to 2700, when the guy prepares for several months, of course it is going to be difficult. I think that now you can pick any player from the top 15, you give him three good seconds and you prepare him for several months and he may put up a fight against the World Champion. But I think Magnus should win. This is my impression. He is simply much younger, that should be decisive.'

You're leading in the Grand Prix and still have to play one tournament. Is it weird to play those tournaments when there is so much uncertainty about the rest of the cycle?
'Yeah, but I am already kind of used to it. FIDE is of course to be blamed, because I think the Grand Prix was a big mistake. Not because it's a bad idea, but because they simply announced a Grand Prix without any bank guarantees. This is the second time that this has happened with the Grand Prix. They often announce events that never really happen. On the other hand, it's also true that in the past the cycle was solid and stable because there was no prize-money. Or, before Fischer, the prize-money was symbolic. It is complicated, but they didn't need to announce these tournaments without guarantees. And of course this contract with AGON was a big mistake. Ten years ago we had Tarasov, now we have Paulson, and it's more or less the same. The guy's promising the stars and apparently he cannot organize... Well, if you give him money, he will do it. But he is not going to put up his money. And he's not going to find money either... If you gave me the money that SOCAR gave Paulson, I could also organize the Candidates' tournament, and probably not worse. Anyone could do it.'

You played two GP tournaments, one in London and one in Zug. What is your gut feeling, is AGON still around?
'No, no. Come on, they are absolutely out. In Zug they were claiming that there was still some kind of collaboration, but nobody could see it, because everything was done by FIDE. The guy was not even near the place. It was clear that Paulson doesn't have any long-term plans with chess. I don't think we are going to see more events from him. Of course FIDE doesn't acknowledge it, but the thing is that it was just a very bad deal for FIDE. He announced things that they guaranteed, and now they have to organize them, because he promised.'

And all because of the FIDE elections next year?
'I guess so. Otherwise I am not sure they would organize the next Grand Prix tournaments. But it's complicated; it's all politics.'

But you are quite close to politics, because Silvio Danailov, who is a FIDE board member and President of the European Chess Union, is still your manager.
'I hear things of course, but again, I still believe, if you remember when there were these two organizations, PCA or Brain Games or whatever, they also tried to organize cycles, but firstly of course it's a question of money. They also failed in a way, because there were no long-term guarantees, so it was like one-move combinations. We do it now and then we search for the next cycle. It was a never-ending story. What is bad is that money that is paid to FIDE by national federations is now going to us, the top players, in order to organize these Grand Prix tournaments. I think some of this money is spent on us, and I don't think that the national presidents will like this. Because this is money that is collected from the base, from licenses, ratings and tournaments. It's not supposed to be used for top events, I think.'

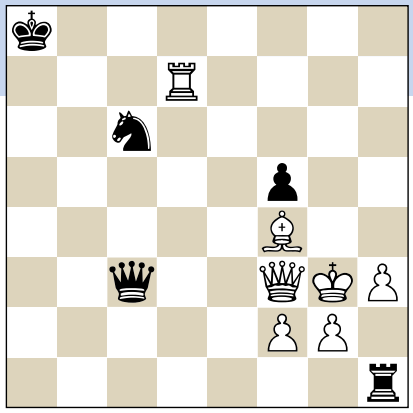
You say you are ready to fight for the highest title once again. Where do you see your limits? Till what age do you think you have a chance?
'Ten years ago I thought that guys of 40 were like... that they lacked energy. But now I've seen Gelfand, even Ivanchuk, who really deserve a lot of respect. And also Anand. They are over 40 and still top level. I suspect I still have some years ahead, but it depends on me. Let's go move by move. First I have to qualify for the Candidates' tournament.'

That would whet your appetite, you think?
'Yeah, of course. That is something that would motivate me. Even now that I have won Zug; that was not something that made me really happy, not something special. This is OK, but it's not the type of event where you can have really great achievements.'

Would you also like to do it again because of things that happened in the past, such as your match against Kramnik? Many people still blame you or Silvio for what happened there and are critical of you as a champion. Would you like to show them that you can do it again?
'Especially those accusations I don't really understand. There have always been accusations. If you blame me, you should also blame Kortchnoi, or Kasparov and Karpov or Fischer. It's not only me. What you cannot do is blame Silvio and then say Fischer was a nice guy or Kasparov was a nice guy. Or Kortchnoi. If you look at the past, there have been really many scandals. If you blame me, you should blame all these guys.'

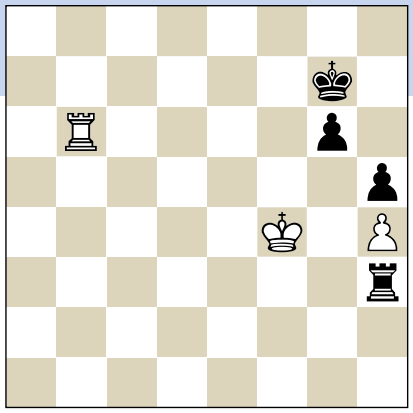
Does it bother you that there are people who have these...
'Not really, because... In football you have people like Cristiano Ronaldo and Messi, and no matter what they achieve, there are people that criticize them. There is always someone to say, yes, but, you know... Sometimes I stop reading what is written on these chess sites. If you enter the forums and you see the insults that anonymous people write about everyone, it's amazing. It's not only me, everyone is being insulted by someone, mostly anonymously, of course.' ■

Beware: Brilliancy! Solutions of page 47



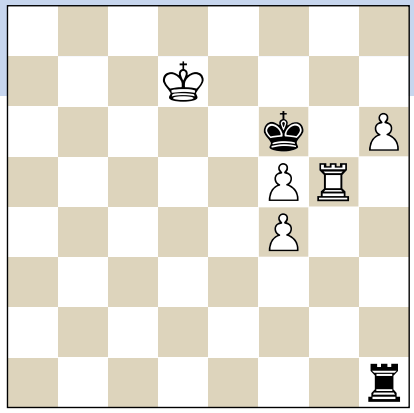
Klinova-Spence
Gibraltar 2006

In fact, 42.♕f3 was a terrible mistake (after 42.♔h4! Black's resignation would have been fully justified), as it allowed Black to save the day with the stunning **42...♕g7+!! 43.♖xg7 ♖xh3+!** With a resulting stalemate!



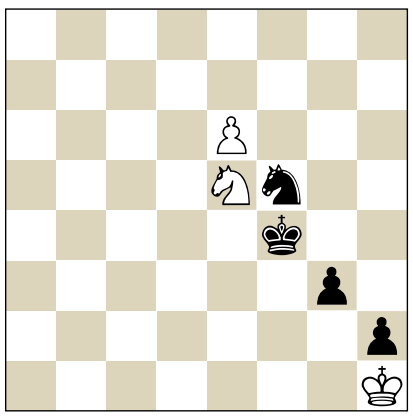
2. Dgebuadze-Afek
Wageningen (rapid) 2013

This and similar positions had occurred relatively often. However, White failed to recognize the pattern, as he could now have rescued half a point with **1.♖b4! ♖xh4+ 2.♔g5 ♖xb4** Stalemate!



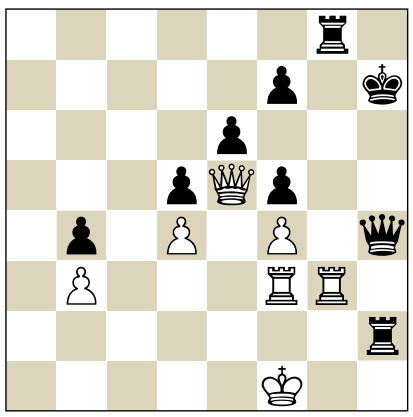
3. Pokojowczijk-Doda
Poznan 1971

The position is crying for a stalemate, but Black failed to grab his chance: **79...♖d1+! 80.♔e8** (or 80.♔c6 ♖c1+ 81.♔d5 ♖d1+ 82.♔e4 ♖e1+ 83.♔f3 ♖h1=) **81...♖e1+ 82.♔f8 ♖e8+! 83.♔xe8** Mission accomplished!



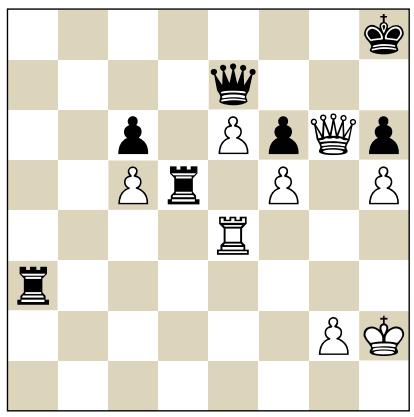
4. Hebden-Baburin
Dun Laoghaire 2010

He surely could: **79.e7! ♘xe7 80.♘f3!! ♔xf3** Stalemate!



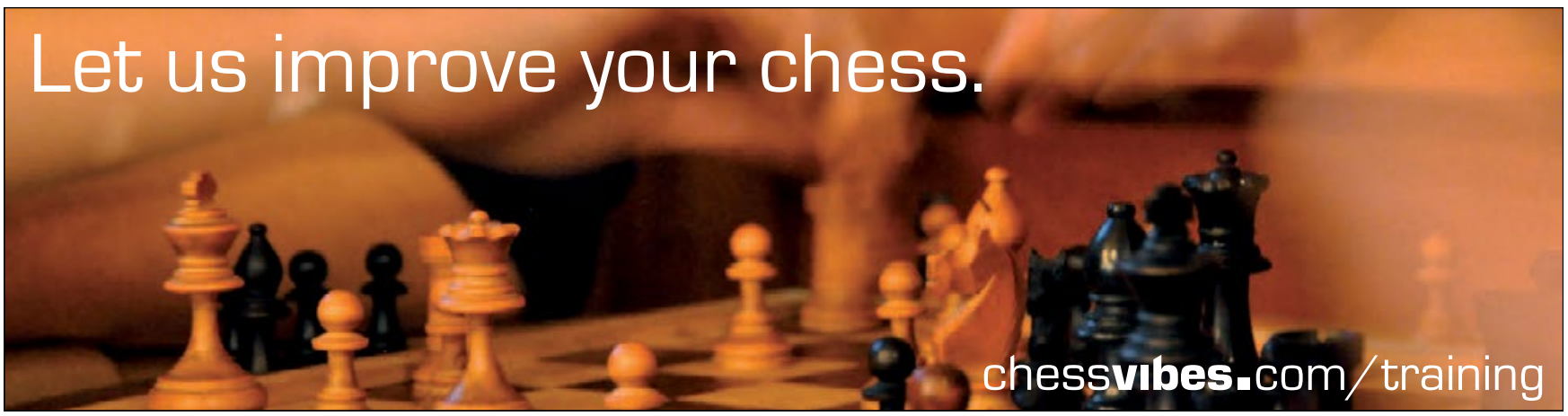
5. Taimanov-Geller
Moscow 1951

Paradoxically, White could in fact take advantage of his own king's awkward position for the energetic **42.♖xg8! ♔xg8 43.♖g3+! ♕xg3 44.♕b8+ ♔g7 45.♕g8+! ♔xg8** Stalemate!



6. Sax-Smejkal
Vrbas 1977

White missed the forcing **39.♕xh6+ ♕h7 40.e7! ♕xh6 41.e8♕+ ♔h7 42.♖e7+ ♕g7 43.♕g6+** mating, while after 39.♖g4, as was played, Black returned the favour missing the brilliant: **39...♕c7+! 40.g3 ♖d2+ 41.♔h3 ♖h2+! 42.♔xh2 ♖a2+ 43.♔h3 ♖h2+! 44.♔xh2 ♕xg3+! 45.♔xg3** Stalemate!



Paris / St.Petersburg

Chess and the art of tradition maintenance

A happy Levon Aronian with the winner's cup, a fine porcelain vase.

Inspired by the positive reverberations of the Anand-Gelfand world championship match at the Moscow Tretyakov Gallery, Russian billionaire Andrei Filatov and his business partner and multi-billionaire Gennady Timchenko reiterated their belief in the happy marriage of chess and art with a grand Alekhine Memorial. Spread between Paris and St. Petersburg, and staged in close cooperation with the Louvre and the State Russian Museum, the Alekhine Memorial was a beguiling celebration of chess and the arts – as well as an unforgettable tribute to the 4th World Champion, who once said: 'I consider chess an art and accept all the responsibilities that art places upon its devotees.' **Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam** watched it all and saw Levon Aronian and Boris Gelfand finish on top. The combative Armenian was declared the winner thanks to a higher number of wins.

The second half of the Alekhine Memorial was played in the Mikhailovsky Castle, part of the State Russian Museum, one of the biggest museums in the world.

What would you do if you won the lottery? Or rather, what would you do if you became so rich that there is virtually no end to your wealth? The options are plentiful. You might try to burn one million pounds in bank notes as the K Foundation art collective claimed to have done in 1994 in an act of 'modern art'. Or, more constructive, you might try to free the world of polio, malaria and other infectious diseases, as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is doing. Or you might support your favourite orchestra or museum in these trying times. Or you might support a variety of causes (with the exception of actually burning money for no good reason), as the family foundations of Gennady Timchenko have been doing. There are three, based in St. Petersburg, Geneva and Moscow and they focus on three areas: science and culture; sport and education; and social programmes. Fortunately for us, the two sports that they support are two traditional Russian pastimes, hockey (ice hockey, that is) and chess. Timchenko, whose fortune is estimated by Forbes magazine to stand at $14.1 billion, doesn't claim to be a strong chess player, but he is taking lessons and everyone who saw him talk with the grandmasters at the Alekhine Memorial understood that he is enjoying the game more and more.

With his good friend Andrei Filatov, estimated wealth $1.35 billion, he shares a passion for chess, art and education. Filatov barely requires an introduction after last year's match in Moscow. His fervent promotion of Russian art, particularly late 19th-century and (early) 20th-century painting, and his love of chess are well known to our readers. As is his fascination for Alexander Alekhine, who was portrayed by Filatov and his good friend, Israeli GM Ilya Smirin, in New In Chess 2013/1.

In fact it was the deal that Filatov and Timchenko sealed with the Louvre to have a permanent display of Russian paintings that paved the way for the Alekhine Memorial in the capital of Alekhine's second home country and the city where he studied at the Imperial Law School and had his first major successes.

As might be expected with such sponsors, the players were treated like royalty. Everything was done in great

An amused Gennady Timchenko listens to Vladimir Kramnik at the press conference. Anatoly Karpov, Andrei Filatov and Ilya Levitov also appreciate the former champ's wit.

style, from the opening night with a performance by world-famous Russian pianist Nikolai Lugansky and violinist Vadim Repin (both passionate chess players!), to the live broadcasts in three languages (with a superb introductory video animation on Alekhine produced by the same company that made the Gazprom video animations for the Champions League), to the venues and the hotels that were picked. In Paris the grandmasters and their seconds stayed in the five-star Hotel du Louvre with a view of the museum, while in St. Petersburg they discovered in the opulent Grand Hotel de l'Europe that five stars in Russia refers to an altogether different league.

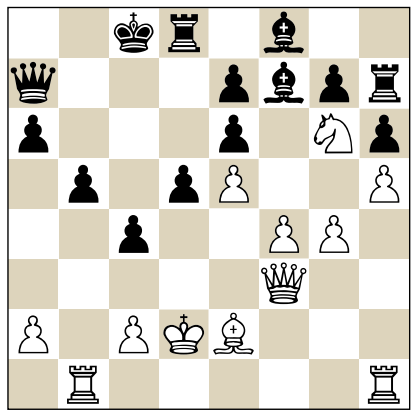
The final four rounds were played in the stately Mikhailovsky Castle, part of the State Russian Museum, a breath-taking collection of Russian art through the ages and one of the biggest museums in the world. But before the tournament moved to St. Petersburg, the first five rounds took place in a marquee that had been erected in a corner of the Tuileries gardens next to the Louvre. It had been a long time since the last international top tournament in Paris and the fans jumped at the occasion to see the stars. There was room for some 300 spectators, but particularly in the first weekend there were queues outside waiting for their turn to get in.

The players obliged with explosive chess. The hero of the first rounds was Mickey Adams, who started with two impressive wins. In Round 1, the Englishman, playing black, got the better of World Champion Vishy Anand in a long battle, in Round 2 he produced a Spanish model game against Peter Svidler. The Russian reproached himself for allowing Adams to show his Ruy Lopez skills and didn't understand why he hadn't played a Sicilian. Perhaps he nursed this regret till the end of the tournament, as this loss heralded one of his poorest results in years.

Vishy Anand wasn't the only favourite to stumble on the very first day. Levon Aronian also lost, against Ding Liren, the young Chinese champion, who made his debut in a supertournament. As Ding Liren explains in his notes to that game, he got an overwhelming position from the opening when Aronian seriously misplaced his light-squared bishop on c4. Still Ding literally had to stumble on a forced win immediately after the first time-control, when at first glance it looked as if his advantage had completely disappeared.

Aronian hit back in the second round at the expense of Vladimir Kramnik, a rival with whom he traditionally wages heavy battles. Following his magnificent play in the Candidates' tournament in London, Kramnik was an obvious favourite for first place, provided he had the energy to keep his form. The Paris-based Russian definitely fought in every game, but wasn't very lucky at crucial moments.

Meanwhile, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave delighted the spectators with the first French win. His boa-constrictor hold of Ding Liren can serve as an illustration of the limitations that even the best engines still have.



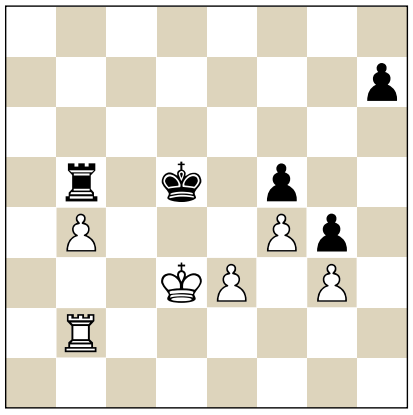
Vachier-Lagrave-Ding Liren
position after 23...c4

Much to the amusement of the experts, Houdini indicated that Black is slightly better here. True, Black is two pawns up, but a brief look at his locked-in kingside and his vulnerable king easily convinces any human that White is totally winning.
Indeed, Vachier-Lagrave only needed 14 more moves. **24.a4 ♔c7 25.axb5 axb5 26.♖xb5 ♕d4+ 27.♔e1 ♖a8 28.♖b1 ♖a2 29.c3 ♕d2+ 30.♔f2 ♖c2 31.♕e3 ♕xe3+ 32.♔xe3 ♖xc3+ 33.♔d4 ♖c2 34.♖he1 ♔c6 35.♖b8 ♗xg6 36.hxg6 ♖h8 37.♖eb1 ♖d2+ 38.♔e3 ♖a2 39.♖8b6+** Black resigned.

Boris Gelfand apparently thrives whenever there is a museum nearby. The Israeli number one played a very solid and stable tournament, with occasional flashes of his extraordinary talent. In Round 3, Gelfand stopped early leader

Mickey Adams with a fine win that he analyses in detail further on.

Vladimir Kramnik failed to convert a winning endgame against Vachier-Lagrave.

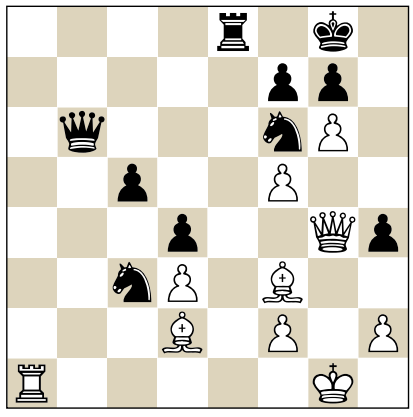


Kramnik-Vachier-Lagrave
position after 38...♔d5

Kramnik played **39.♖b1** and the game ended in a draw. As commentator Jan Timman pointed out, White could have won comfortably with **39.e4+ fxe4+ 40.♔e3 h5 41.♖d2+ ♔e6 42.♖d4**, and Black's task is hopeless.

The pack of leaders increased to four in Round 4, when Aronian joined Adams, Gelfand and Vachier-Lagrave with a win over Svidler. In a less popular line of the Grünfeld, the Armenian used a novelty he had prepared for the Candidates' tournament to great effect.

Laurent Fressinet missed an excellent chance to please his fans when he was on the verge of beating Adams. Not for the first time in history the situation changed dramatically on move 40.



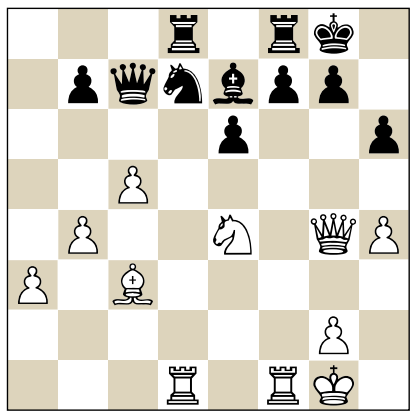
Fressinet-Adams
position after 39...♘f6

Here, with sufficient time on the clock, Fressinet inexplicably played **40.gxf7+** and the game ultimately ended in a draw. Had he taken one quiet moment to appreciate the power of the pawn on g6 a bit better, he would no doubt have found that after 40.♕xh4, with the threat ♗g5, Black would soon have had to resign.

Fressinet had little time to regret this painful oversight, as his big moment arrived less than 24 hours later. How many players in the world can say that they fearlessly attacked Vladimir Kramnik with the black pieces and blew him away way before the first time-control? That's exactly what Fressinet did, and the brilliant 'coup de grâce' that he delivered on move 25 will no doubt remain one of the highlights in his career.

In fact, the last round in Paris felt like a French holiday altogether, as both local favourites won. Maxime Vachier-Lagrave not only punished Svidler's uncertain middlegame play, he also left for St. Petersburg as the sole leader. The remaining pairings showed that it was way too early to think of tournament victory for the French number one, but who could have predicted that the Alekhine Memorial would resume in Russia with a French leader?

Vishy Anand finally won his first game in Round 5. Ding Liren again found it hard to find his way in the Caro-Kann and was severely punished.



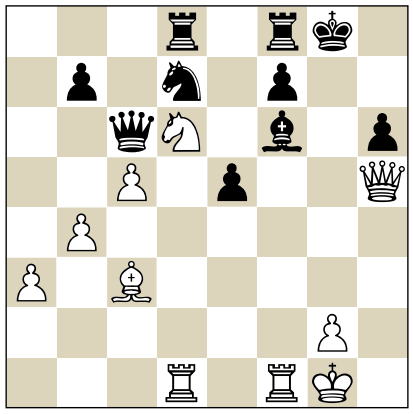
Anand-Ding Liren
position after 24.♕g4

White has so many trumps that there is no way Black can avert disaster. **24...g6 25.♘d6 e5 26.♕c4 ♘b6**

NEW IN CHESS

Vadim Repin and Nikolai Lugansky performed at the opening ceremony.

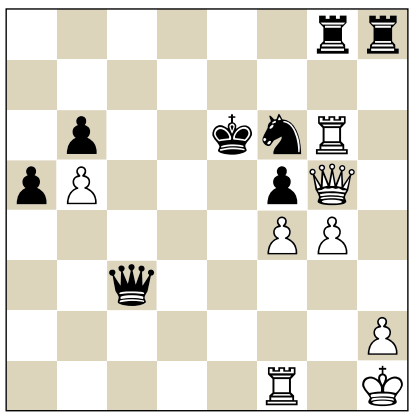
27.♕e4 ♘d7 28.h5 gxh5 29.♕f5 ♗f6 30.♕xh5 ♕c6 30...♗g7 31.♖xf7 can hardly be called an alternative.



31.♖xf6 As simple as that. **31...♘xf6 32.♕xe5** 1-0.

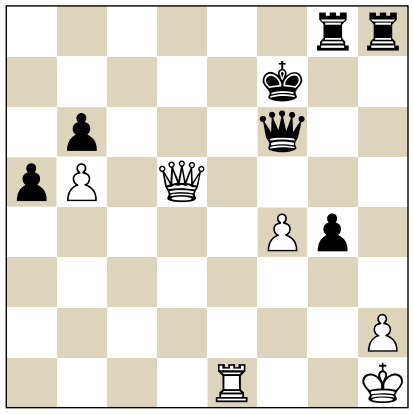
The transfer to St. Petersburg was another highlight the players will not easily forget. While some of them may have been temporarily disappointed that Andrei Filatov only had space for Anand, Aronian, Gelfand and Kramnik in his private jet, they soon breathed normally again when they found that a much bigger private plane was waiting on the tarmac for them, the officials of the Russian chess federation and a number of lucky journalists.

The first round in St. Petersburg brought no decisions, although there was one draw that definitely had bearing on the final standings. Aronian miraculously escaped from a totally lost position against Adams.



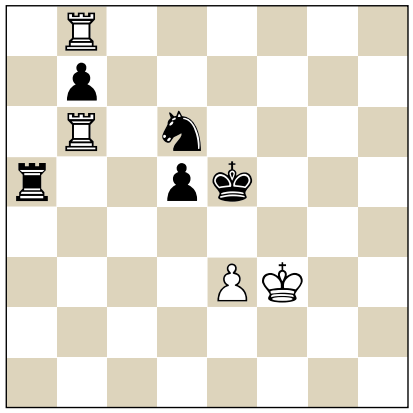
Aronian-Adams
position after 37.g4

Aronian tries his last trick. **37...fxg4?** And Adams falls for it. After 37...♔f7 Black's win would soon have been a fact. **38.♖xf6+! ♕xf6 39.♖e1+ ♔f7 40.♕d5+**



And because of the clumsy position of the black king and queen, White is back in the game again. After **40...♔f8 41.♖e5 ♖xh2+ 42.♔xh2 ♕xf4+ 43.♔g1 ♕g3+ 44.♔f1 ♕f3+ 45.♕xf3+ gxf3 46.♖e6 ♖g2 47.♖xb6** the players ended up in a drawn rook endgame.

For the French players, who had not lost a single game in Paris, the second half was tough. No more games were won and with his loss to Nikita Vitiugov, who played excellently in *his* city, Vachier-Lagrave finally had to give up his place among the leaders. With one round to go Boris Gelfand became the sole leader. Keeping a cool head he managed to make a draw against Kramnik, who once again wasn't rewarded for his hard work.



Kramnik-Gelfand
position after 63...♖xa5

After another protracted battle, Kramnik played **64.♖d8** and the game was drawn after 73 moves. As commentator Judit Polgar pointed out, he should have played 64.♖h8 ♖c5 65.♖h5+ ♘f5 66.♖g6 ♖c3 67.♖gg5 ♖xe3+ 68.♔f2 ♖d3 69.♖xf5+, and White wins easily.

Kramnik was finally rewarded for his perseverance in the last round, when from a slightly worse position he slowly but surely ground down Adams. After more than six hours of play, Kramnik still had so much energy left that he rushed to the press conference and explained the game in great detail.

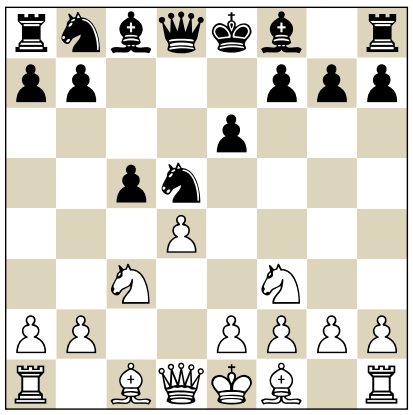
Unfortunately for him, his win was no longer relevant for the fight for first place. That fight was decided between Gelfand and Aronian. Gelfand didn't take any unnecessary risks against Anand and put the onus on Aronian, who now had to win to catch up with him. That's exactly what the top-seed did in a long game against Vachier-Lagrave. And not only did Aronian catch up with Gelfand, he was also declared the winner of the Alekhine Memorial. As the first tiebreaker (the number of games played with black) didn't bring a decision, the second tiebreaker (the highest number of wins) decided the issue in Aronian's favour. He won three games (and lost one) while Gelfand won two (but remained undefeated). At the prize-giving Aronian said that he was happy to share first place with his good friend Boris, but he, too, knew full well why the winner's trophy had been presented to him.

Whether there will be a second Alekhine Memorial is unclear. There are rumours that Filatov and Timchenko are thinking of a Botvinnik Memorial. Certainly no one would object to such a tribute to the founder of the Soviet School of chess. And, come to think of it, wouldn't a Chigorin Memorial be a great way to honour the father of Russian chess? Other names come to mind, too. In any case it's a comforting thought that there are still more than enough great museums around the world that would be a fitting venue for a great chess tournament!

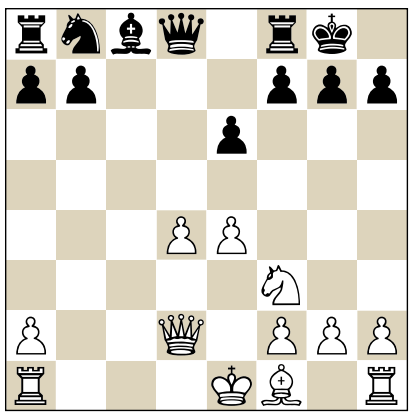
NOTES BY
Levon Aronian

TD 2.9 – D41
Levon Aronian
Vladimir Kramnik
Paris/St. Petersburg 2013 (2)

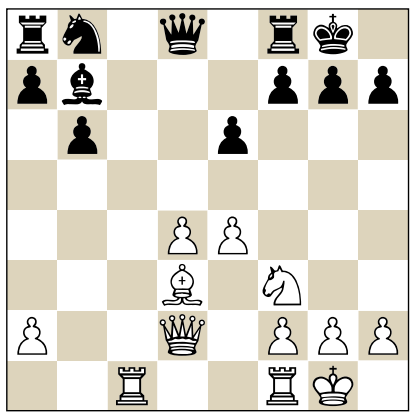
1.d4
This game was played in the second round. In the first round I lost an instructive game to Ding Liren, and I felt a strong desire to rehabilitate myself.
1...♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 c5
Kramnik is a great lover of solid set-ups for Black. In recent times he has begun employing the deferred Tarrasch Defence.
5.cxd5 ♘xd5



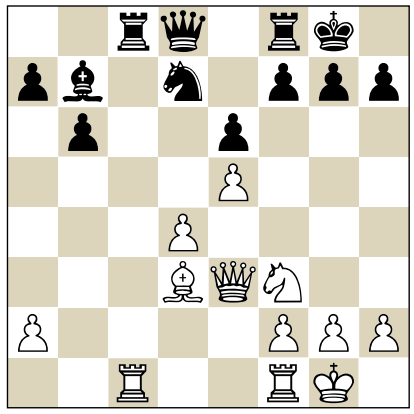
6.e4
At the Candidates' Tournament in London I tried 6.e3 against Vladimir. In view of this unsuccessful experience, I decided to be the first to deviate.
6...♘xc3 7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4 ♗b4+ 9.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 10.♕xd2 0-0



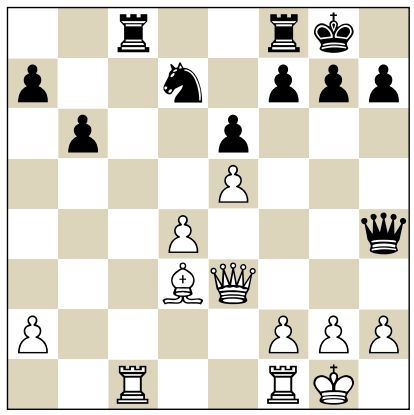
From the standpoint of all the rules that we were taught in childhood, Black's play looks incompetent – he has exchanged his developed pieces and conceded the centre. The idea of this variation is that, despite its certain passivity, Black has equal play, since for the moment there is nothing for White to attack, and the creation of a passed pawn by d4-d5 is not an easy decision, since the black pieces gain an important outpost on c5.
11.♖c1
With this rare move White tries for the moment to delay the development of his bishop and invite Black to choose a plan.
11...b6
The most natural. In the event of 11... ♘c6 12.♗e2 Black is forced to lose time in order to develop his bishop on its 'lawful' square b7.
12.♗d3 ♗b7 13.0-0



13...♘d7
In my preparations I regarded 13... h6 as the main move, to avoid for the moment determining the knight's position.
13...♘c6 is also possible and after 14.d5 it leads to interesting positions, the evaluation of which should be demonstrated by future games.
14.♕e3 ♖c8
After 14...♘f6 15.♘e5 followed by f2-f3, White's advantage, although not great, is of an enduring nature. After a long think Vladimir decided to allow me to carry out the typical e4-e5 advance.
15.e5
Now White is threatening to transfer his knight to d6.

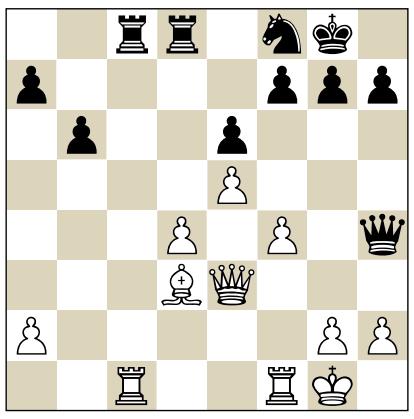


15...♗xf3 On this radical and very interesting decision my opponent spent a good deal of time.
16.♕xf3 ♕h4
Black tries to instil harmony into his game by tempo-gaining play.
17.♕e3 After more than 30 minutes I decided to choose an active plan. Of course, I wanted to drive the knight back to b8 by 17.♗b5, but how then to continue playing for an advantage is something that I still don't know.

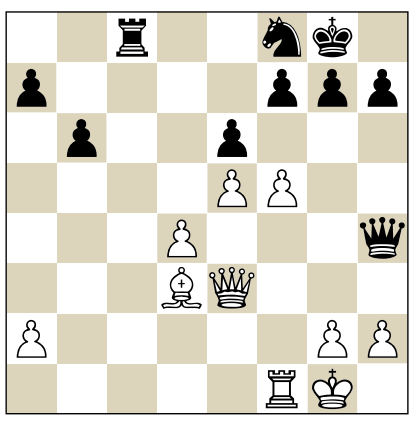


17...♖fd8
Now Black wants to play a quick ...♘f8-g6. It is curious that at various moments many computer programs want to play ...g7-g6, making Black's preceding play completely pointless.
18.f4 White's main idea is to try and exchange his f-pawn for the e-pawn and thus obtain a passed d-pawn. This is a very concrete idea, and it is associated with the temporarily bad position of the black knight.
18...♘f8 As my opponent rightly emphasized after the game, it was more correct to exchange first on c1 and only then play ...♘f8. Now Black has problems which are difficult to solve in a practical game.

In his winner's speech Levon Aronian said that he felt he had won the Alekhine Memorial together with his good friend Boris Gelfand.



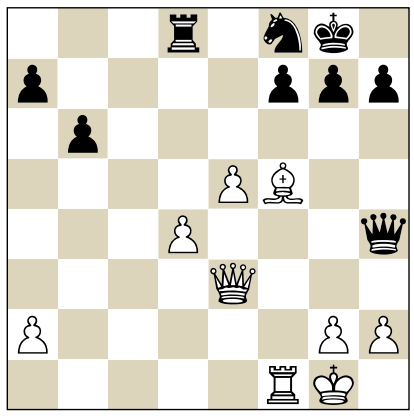
19.♖xc8 ♖xc8 20.f5



20...exf5

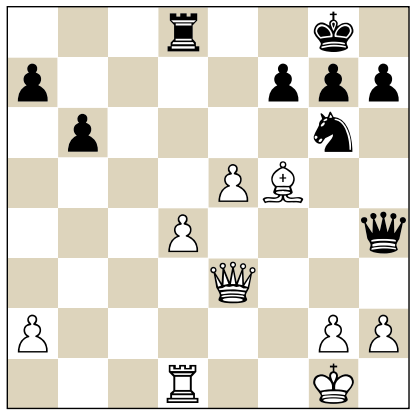
I sensed that the correct move for Black was 20...♖d8, but I suspected that my opponent would aim for a clearer continuation. After 20...♖d8 the reply 21.♖f4 is a blank shot, since with the cunning 21...♕g5, with the idea after 22.h4 of playing 22...♕h6, Black prevents the strengthening move g2-g4. I was intending to fight for an advantage with 21.♗e4, although I realized that in this case my task would be more difficult.

21.♗xf5 ♖d8



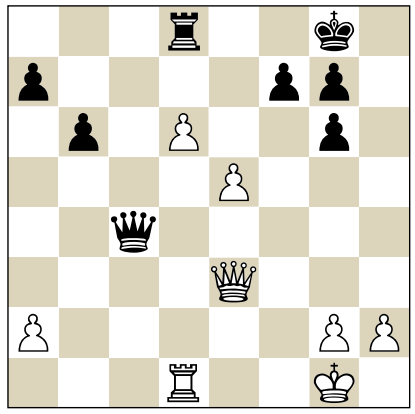
22.♖d1 As Vladimir remarked after the game, he had underestimated this move. Now White has an enduring advantage.

22...♘g6



23.♗xg6 This may not be the optimal decision, but from the practical point of view it is easy to understand. Is there anything more wonderful in our world than playing a position where your opponent has absolutely no counterplay?

23...hxg6 24.d5 ♕c4 25.d6



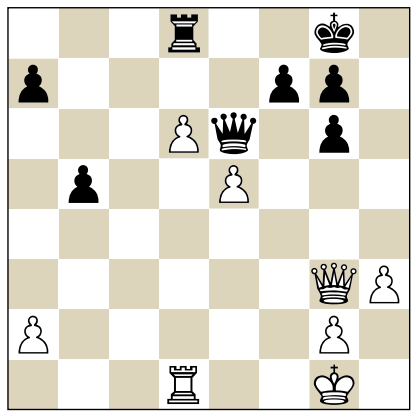
25...♕e6 The capture on a2 would have led to a dangerous position after 25...♕xa2 26.♕g5 f6 (26...♖d7 is altogether bad because of 27.♖c1) 27.exf6 ♕f7 28.fxg7. With such an exposed king it should be practically impossible to defend.

26.♕g3

After all the transformations the position has stabilized, and with correct play it should be won for White. The main motif is the threat to exchange queens.

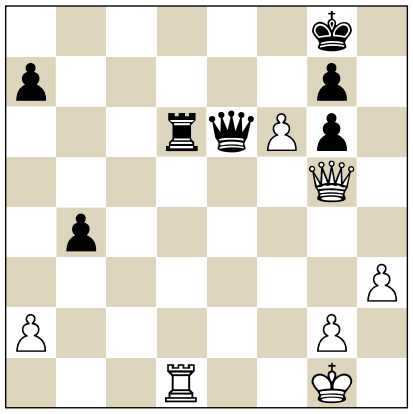
26...b5 27.h3

With this move I set a little trap.



27...a6

Of course, taking on a2 is bad for the same reason as earlier, but 27...b4 suggested itself. Then White has the strong idea 28.♕g5 f6 29.exf6 ♖xd6

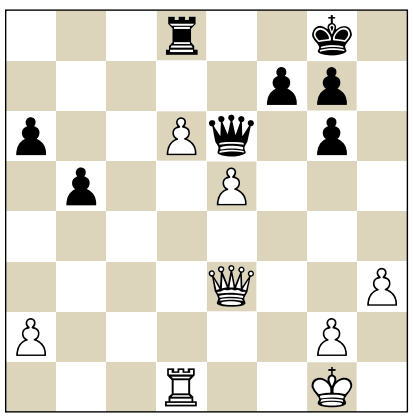


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

30.f7+!. After 30...♔xf7 31.♕f4+ ♔e7 32.♕xb4 I thought that this position with the exposed king on e7 would be indefensible for Black.

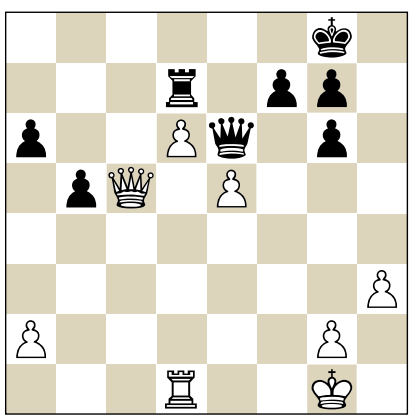
28.♕e3

An impatient move. After 28.♔h1 or some other waiting move, Black would have been in genuine zugzwang. Since after 28...♖d7 White has 29.♖c1 and any other move also worsens Black's position, the conversion of the advantage would have been far easier.



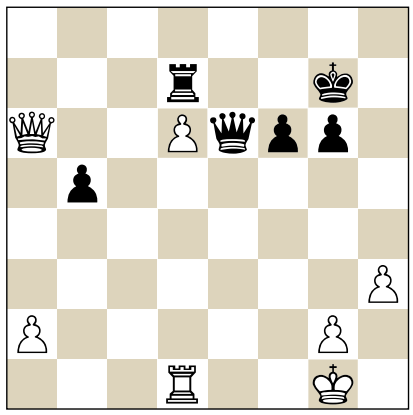
28...♖d7 Black prepares to play ...f7-f6. He cannot play this immediately, since after 28...f6 29.♕b6 the a6- and b5-pawns come under attack.

29.♕c5



29...♔h7

A mistake. The only chance of continuing the fight was 29...f6. Of course, in order to play this you would have to notice something that we both missed! It appears that in the event of 30.exf6 gxf6 31.♕c8+ Black loses the a6-pawn and after 31...♔g7 32.♕xa6



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

32...♕e2 33.♖b1 he has a difficult endgame, but it transpires that he has the excellent resource 32...♕e3+ 33.♔h1 ♕c5 with a draw, since the white queen is absolutely powerless and the d6-pawn is not going anywhere. After 29...f6 I would have had to play 30.exf6 gxf6 31.♕c6, with an advantage, which with correct play I think should be sufficient for a win.

> 'As Tal once wisely commented, for one win you don't gain more than one point.'

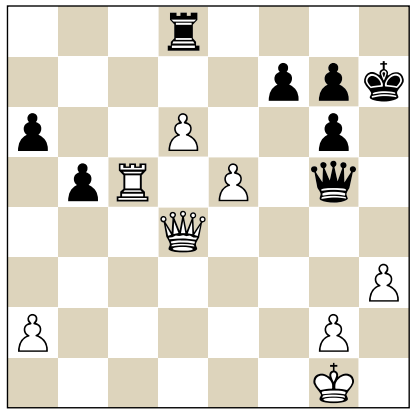
30.♕d5 ♕e8 Of course, Black cannot exchange the queens. Now only a miracle can save him.

31.♖c1 ♕d8 32.♖c6

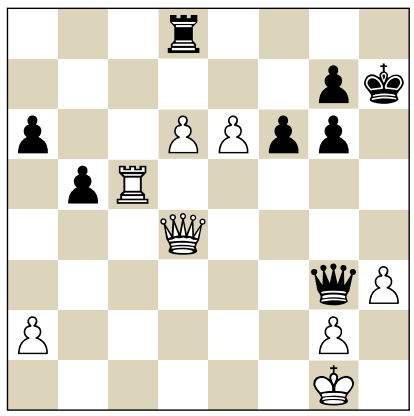
Defending against ...f7-f6.

32...♕g5 33.♕d4 ♖d8 34.♖c5

Amazing carelessness!



34...♕g3 Thanks to my error Black has again acquired drawing chances! After 34...f6 35.e6 ♕g3 White cannot simultaneously defend his e6- and d6-pawns.

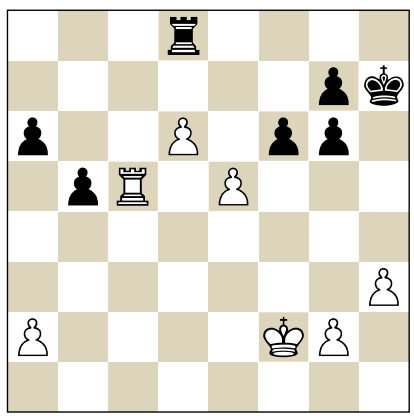


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

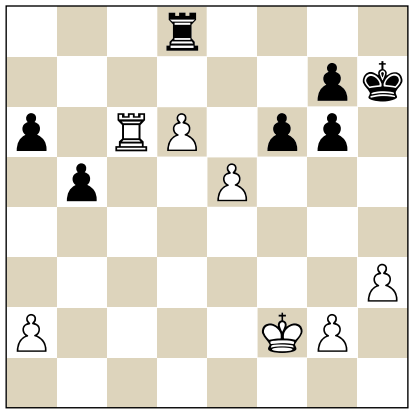
He would probably have had to play 35.♔h2 fxe5 36.♖xe5 ♕f6 37.♖d5, reaching a position where the win for White is difficult to achieve.

35.♕f2 After the exchange of queens the activity of the white king decides the game.

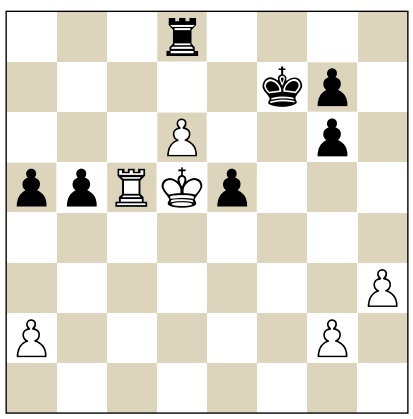
35...♕xf2+ 36.♔xf2 f6



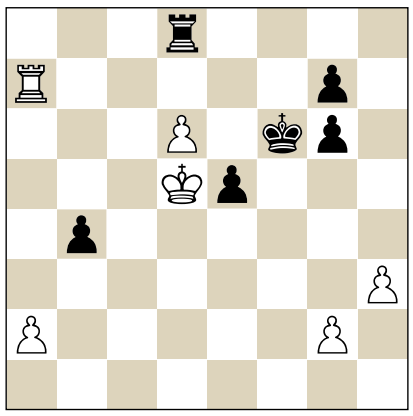
37.♖c6 The pretty 37.♖c8 was also possible, but as Tal once wisely commented, for one win you don't gain more than one point.



37...fxe5 38.♔e3 ♔g8 39.♔e4 ♔f7 40.♔d5 40.♔xe5 also wins easily. To me the move in the game seemed more aesthetic.
40...a5 41.♖c5



White's position is so won, that even such an acknowledged expert as myself in reducing won positions to a draw was unable to do anything.
41...b4 Play with ...e4-e3 always runs into the rook manoeuvre to e7.
42.♖xa5 ♔f6 43.♖a7

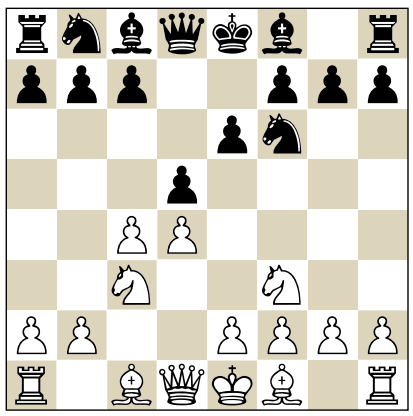


Preparing ♔c6, after which White easily promotes a new queen. **43...♖b8 44.♔c6 b3 45.axb3 ♖xb3 46.♖a8 ♖c3+ 47.♔d7 e4 48.♖f8+ ♔g5 49.♔e7 e3 50.d7 e2 51.d8♕ e1♕+ 52.♔d6+ ♕e7+** Black resigned.

NOTES BY
Boris Gelfand

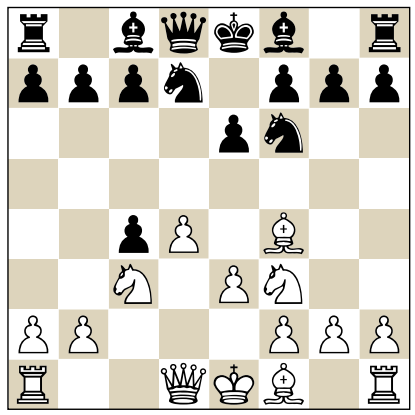
QO 16.14 – D37
Boris Gelfand
Michael Adams
Paris/St.Petersburg 2013 (3)

It was an honour and a pleasure for me to play in the Alekhine Memorial, which was held in Le Louvre in Paris and the Russian Museum in St.Petersburg. The event was perfectly organized, and in the very centre of Paris people were staying in line to be able to watch the games!
Michael had started excellently, beating both Anand and Svidler in great style. So this game was important from a sporting point of view.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3

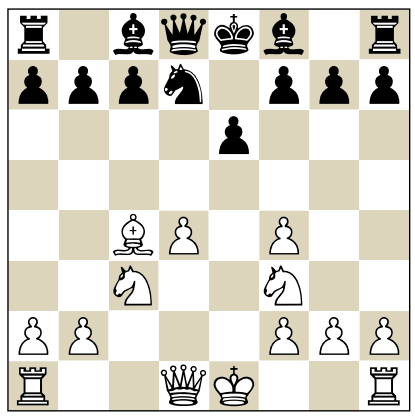


4...♘bd7 The alternative is 4...♗e7 5.♗g5 (or 5.♗f4 c6 6.e3 ♘bd7 7.h3 0-0 8.♕c2 dxc4 9.♗xc4 ♘b6 10.♗b3 ♘fd5 11.0-0 ♘xf4 12.exf4 ♘d5 13.g3 ♘xc3 14.♕xc3 ♕d6 15.♖ac1 ♗d7 16.♘e5 ♖ad8 17.♖fd1 ♗c8 18.a3 ♗f6 19.♕e3 ♕e7 20.h4 ♖d6 21.h5 ♖fd8 22.♖c3 g6 23.♗c2 ♕f8 24.hxg6 hxg6 25.g4 ♕e8 26.g5 ♗g7 27.♗e4 1-0, Rubinstein-Canal, Rogaska Slatina 1929) 5...♘bd7 6.e3 0-0 7.♖c1 c6 8.♕c2 a6 9.a4 ♖e8 10.♗d3 dxc4 11.♗xc4 ♘d5 12.♗f4 ♘xf4 13.exf4 c5 14.dxc5 ♕c7 15.0-0 ♕xf4 16.♘e4 ♘xc5 17.♘xc5 ♗xc5 18.♗d3 b6 19.♗xh7+ ♔h8 20.♗e4 ♖a7 21.b4 1-0, Alekhine-Rubinstein, Karlsbad 1923.
5.♗f4 For some reason, this move is not very popular, and we see 5.♗g5 more often.

5...dxc4
If 5...♗e7?! now, then 6.♘b5 is very unpleasant.
6.e3



6...♘d5
Black uses the opportunity to exchange the f4-bishop, but as the above-mentioned games Alekhine-Rubinstein and Rubinstein-Canal show, this is not always in Black's favour.
Ivanchuk managed to equalize after 6...a6 7.a4 ♗d6 (dubious is 7...♘b6?! 8.a5 ♘bd5 9.♗xc4 ♘xf4 10.exf4 ♗e7 11.0-0 0-0 12.♘e5 ♕d6 13.♖e1 c6 14.f5! exf5 15.♘xf7! ♖xf7 16.♕b3 1-0, Gelfand-Graf, Plovdiv 2003) 8.♗g3 b6 9.♗xc4 ♗b7 10.♗h4 0-0 11.0-0 ♕b8 12.d5 exd5 13.♘xd5 ♘xd5 14.♗xd5 ♘e5 15.♖c1 ♗xd5 16.♕xd5 c6 17.♕e4 ♘xf3+ 18.♕xf3 ♗xh2+ 19.♔h1 ♗e5 20.♖xc6 b5 21.axb5 ♕xb5 ½-½, Carlsen-Ivanchuk, Cap d'Agde 2008.
6...♘b6 7.♗xc4 ♘xc4 8.♕a4+ ♗d7 9.♕xc4 also gives Black the pair of bishops, but White still holds some advantage, according to modern theory.
7.♗xc4 ♘xf4 8.exf4

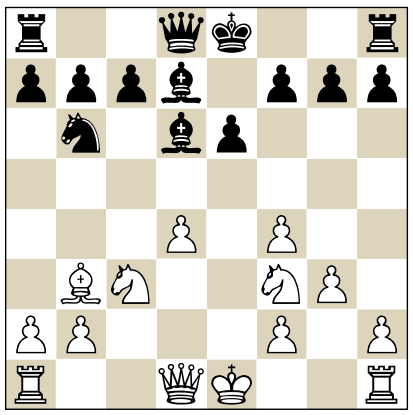


8...♘b6

After 8...♗d6, Mikhail Botvinnik won games against Ragozin and Menchik in this system: 9.g3 0-0 10.0-0 ♘f6 11.♕e2 b6 12.♖fd1 ♗b7 13.♖ac1 ♕e7 14.a3 ♖fd8 15.♘e5 c5 16.♘b5 cxd4 17.♘xd4 ♗xe5 18.♕xe5 ♕d6 19.♗b3 ♕xe5 20.fxe5 ♘e8 21.f4 a6 22.♔f2 ♔f8 23.f5 ♗d5 24.fxe6 ♗xb3 25.e7+ 1-0, Botvinnik-Menchik, Hastings 1934/35.

9.♗b3 ♗d6 10.g3 ♗d7

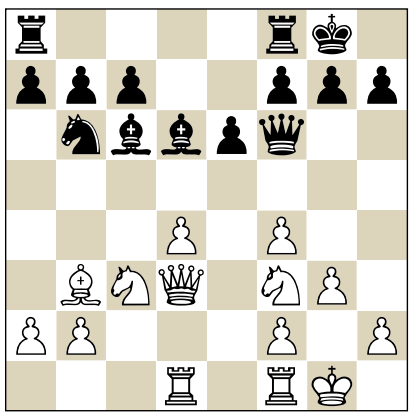
Black wants to exchange the light-squared bishop from c6, then play ...c6 and ...g6 and get a defensible position.



11.0-0

The more ambitious 11.♕d3 ♗c6 12.0-0-0!? ♗xf3 13.♕xf3 c6 14.♔b1 g6 (14...0-0 15.f5 exf5 16.♕xf5 gives White a pleasant edge due to the strong bishop on b3) 15.f5! (White had to foresee this move) 15...exf5 16.♖he1+ ♔f8 17.g4, with a strong attack, deserved serious attention.

11...0-0 12.♕d3 ♗c6 13.♖ad1 ♕f6



14.♘g5

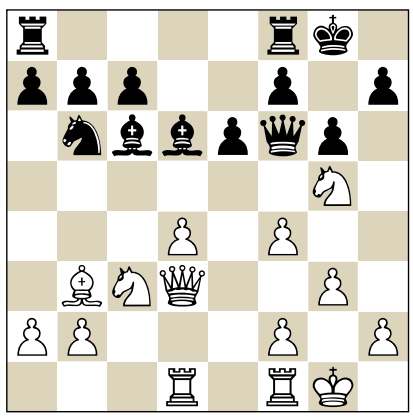
14.♘e5 ♗xe5 15.dxe5 ♕e7 doesn't offer much. Probably stronger was 14.d5!? exd5 15.♘xd5 ♘xd5 16.♗xd5

BORIS DOLMATOVSKY

Game over. As Mickey Adams gets up and chief-arbiter Boris Postovsky collects the score-sheets, Boris Gelfand knows that he has brought back the tension in the Alekhine Memorial.

♗xd5 17.♕xd5 b6 18.♖d2, and the bishop on d6 is passive.

14...g6 The engine's suggestion 14...♕f5 15.♕e2 ♕a5 16.♖fe1 h6 seems to be a good way to equalize.

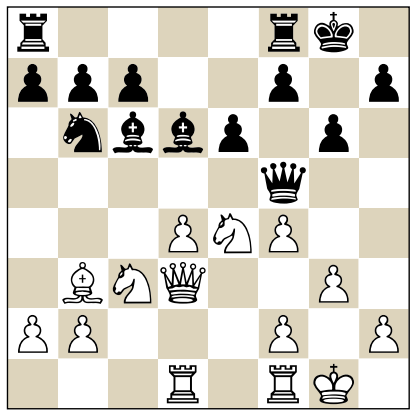


15.♘ge4

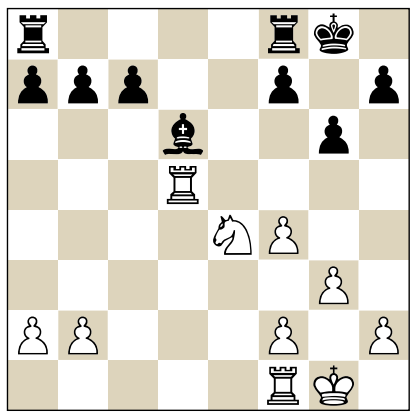
White would have full compensation for the pawn after 15.d5 exd5 16.♗xd5 ♗xd5 17.♘xd5 ♕xb2 18.♖d2 ♕g7 19.♘e4 ♘xd5 20.♕xd5 b6, but it is unlikely that White would have any realistic winning chances.

15...♕f5

I was more worried about 15...♗xe4 16.♘xe4 ♕e7, when I would have a choice: 17.♖fe1 (or 17.d5 e5 18.f5 ♘d7 and Black's position looks solid) 17...c6 18.h4 a5 19.a3 a4 20.♗a2 ♘d5 21.h5, with some pressure.



16.d5 This is White's main idea, so I didn't hesitate much. **16...exd5 17.♘xd5 ♘xd5 18.♗xd5 ♗xd5 19.♕xd5 ♕xd5 20.♖xd5**

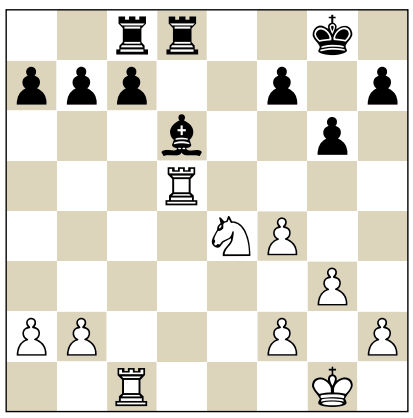


White has doubled pawns and the black bishop is theoretically better than the white knight. However, the

strong pressure along the open files gives the advantage to White and forces Black to defend accurately.

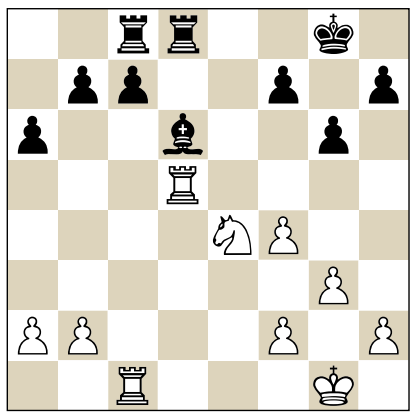
20...♖fd8 Probably stronger was 20...♖ad8!? 21.♘xd6 (21.♖c1 f5! – a key move – 22.♘xd6 cxd6, and Black is doing fine) 21...cxd6 (21...♖xd6 22.♖xd6 cxd6 23.♖e1 ♖c8 24.♖e7 leaves White with winning chances) 22.♖fd1 ♖fe8 23.♔f1 ♖e6 24.f5, and although White has an edge, I believe that the drawing tendencies of the double rook ending would prevail.

21.♖c1 ♖ac8



22.♖c3 White had a wide choice, and I decided to improve the rook's position.

A great suggestion of the engine that I failed to notice was 22.♖a5!? a6 23.♖d5!.



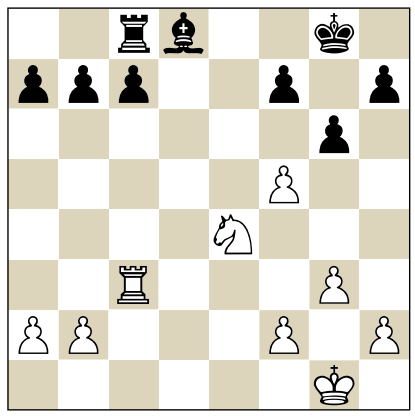
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

Despite losing two tempi, it is very important to get Black's pawn to a6, as after 23...♗e7 24.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 25.♘c5 b6 26.♘xa6 White wins a pawn and keeps good winning chances: 26...♖a8 27.♘b4 c5 28.♘c6 ♗f6 29.b4 ♖xa2 30.bxc5 bxc5 31.♖xc5 ♖d2 32.♖c4, and White can still try, but Black should probably hold.

22...♗e7

Or 22...♔g7 23.f5 gxf5 24.♖xf5 ♗e7 25.♖cf3 (that's why I had put my rook on c3!) 25...♖d1+ 26.♔g2 ♖f8 27.♘g5 ♗xg5 28.♖xg5+ ♔h8 29.♖a5 a6 30.♖b3, winning a pawn.

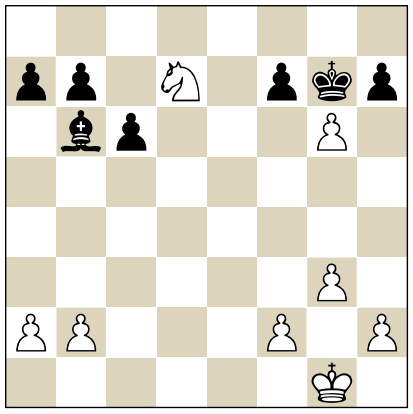
23.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 24.f5



24...♔g7

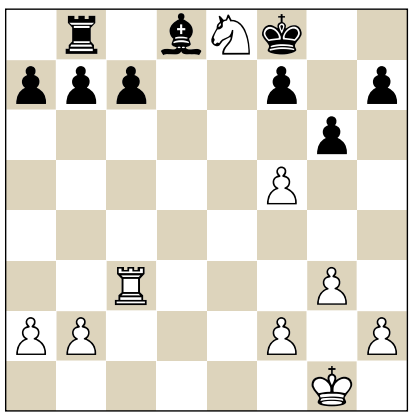
It was not easy to make the right choice.

24...gxf5 25.♘d6 ♖b8 26.♘xf5 doesn't solve Black's problems either.
The engine's suggestion looks strange, but is probably sufficient for a draw: 24...c6 25.♖d3 ♗b6! 26.♖d7 ♖d8 27.fxg6 ♖xd7 (also good enough is 27...hxg6 28.♖xb7 ♖d4 29.♘f6+ ♔g7 30.♘d7 ♖d2 31.♘xb6 ♖xb2 32.♖xa7 ♖xb6, and soon we'll get a totally drawn ♖+3 vs. ♖+2 pawns ending) 28.♘f6+ ♔g7 29.♘xd7

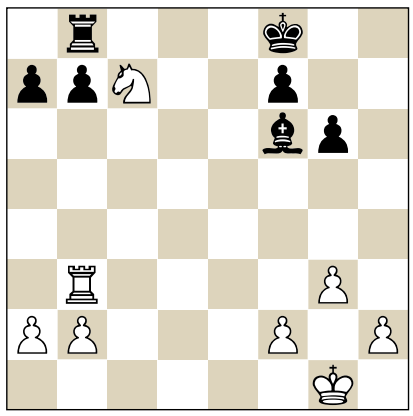


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

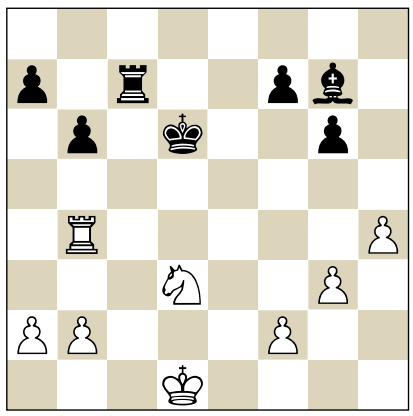
29...♗d4! (29...fxg6? 30.♘xb6 axb6 31.♔g2, and this pawn ending seems to be lost: 31...♔f6 32.f4 b5 33.a3 ♔f5 34.♔f3 h5 35.h3 ♔e6 36.♔e4 ♔f6 37.g4 hxg4 38.hxg4 ♔e6 39.f5+) 30.gxh7 ♗xb2, and Black should be able to hold.
Finally, 24...♗e7 25.f6 ♗f8 26.♔g2 is pretty dangerous, as the king cannot join the game.
25.♘d6 ♖b8 26.♘e8+ ♔f8



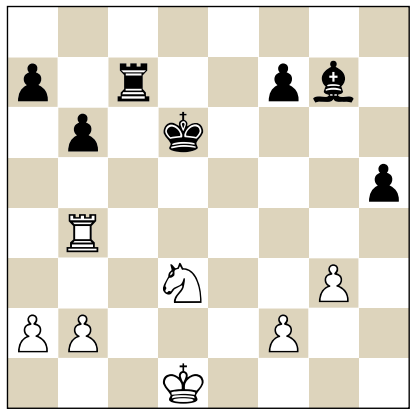
27.fxg6
I was not sure whether to include this exchange, but it probably doesn't change the evaluation of the position. For example, 27.♘xc7 ♗f6 28.♖b3 ♖d8! 29.♖xb7 ♖d2 30.♖xa7 ♗d4 31.♖a8+ ♔g7 32.♔h1 ♖xf2 33.♘e8+ ♔h6 34.♘d6 ♔h5!, and Black retains good drawing chances.
27...hxg6 27...♔xe8 is of course impossible, because of 28.g7.
28.♘xc7 ♗f6 29.♖b3 Alternatively, 29.♖c2 ♖d8 30.♘b5 a6 31.♘c3 ♗xc3 32.♖xc3 ♖d2 would soon transpose to ♖+3 vs. ♖+2.



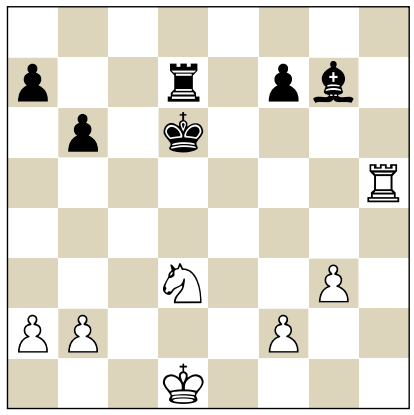
29...♗e5? This is the decisive mistake. Black had to keep the knight on c7 out of play by any means: 29...♖d8! 30.♔f1 (30.♖xb7 ♖d2 31.♖b8+ ♔e7 32.♔f1 ♗xb2, and Black's activity should be enough to hold) 30...♖d2 31.♖xb7 ♗xb2 32.♘b5 a6 33.♘d6 ♗a1 (33...♖xd6 34.♖xb2 retains winning chances) 34.♖xf7+ ♔g8 35.♘e4 ♖xa2 36.♖a7 a5, and it's hard to say whether the extra pawn should be enough for victory.
30.♘d5
Now White has to consolidate: take the knight to d3 to defend the b2- and f2-pawns and take the king into the centre.
30...b6
Or 30...♖d8 31.♘e3 ♖d7 32.♔f1, and White consolidates as well.
31.♘b4 ♖c8 32.♘d3 ♗f6 33.h4 ♖c2 34.♔f1 ♔e7 35.♔e1 ♔d6 36.♖b4 ♗g7 37.♔d1 ♖c7



Sooner or later White has to decide what to do with the extra pawn on the kingside: either to play g4, h5 and get a passed pawn, or to exchange it like I did in the game. I believe I made the right choice, as both the h5- and f5-squares are very important for White's rook.
38.h5!? gxh5

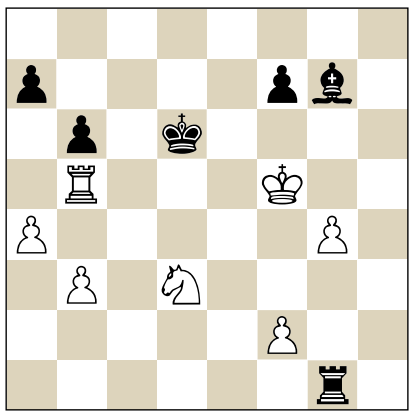


39.♖b5?! More precise was 39.♖h4!, avoiding the possibility of ...h5-h4. However, I was reluctant to allow the activation of Black's king: 39...♔d5 40.f3 (40.♖xh5+ ♔e4) 40...♖d7 41.♖xh5+ ♔c4 42.♔c2.
39...♖d7
A better chance was 39...h4! 40.gxh4 ♖c4 41.h5 ♖h4 42.♔e2 ♗h6, and it is very difficult for White to advance.
40.♖xh5 Now White has a clear plan. He has to put the rook on b5 and advance the king and the kingside pawns, while ensuring that Black does not get any counterplay.

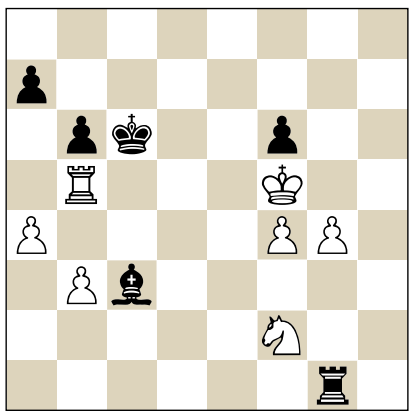


40...♔e7 41.♔e2 ♖c7 42.♖b5 ♖c4 43.♔f3 ♖a4 44.a3 ♖d4 45.♔e3 ♖c4 46.b3 ♖c2 47.a4 ♖c6 Or 47...♗c3 48.g4.
48.g4 ♖e6+ 49.♔f3 ♖c6
After 49...♖d6 White plays 50.♘f4.

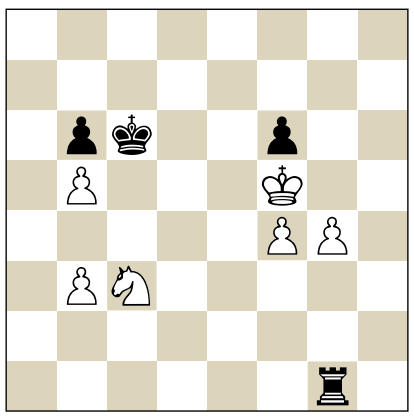
50.♔e4 ♖e6+ 51.♔f3 ♖c6 52.♘b4 ♖c1 53.♔e4 ♔d6 54.♘d3 ♖g1 If 54...♖c2 then White plays 55.♖d5+ ♔e7 56.f4.
55.♔f5



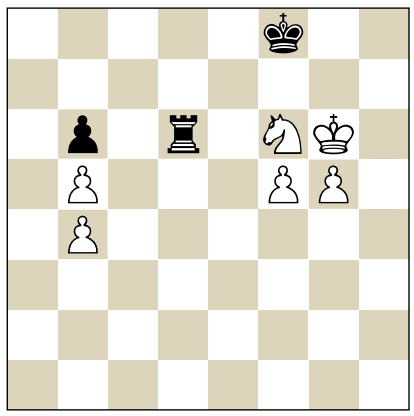
White has almost completed his plan, which was described in the note after move 40.
55...♗c3 56.f4 I was not afraid of the change of course this entailed, but 56.g5 ♖d1 57.♘e5 would have been simpler.
56...f6 57.♘f2 ♔c6



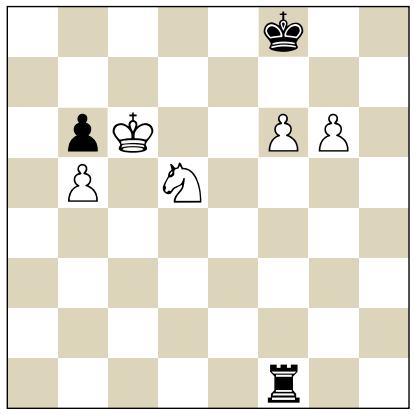
Now the rook is trapped, but White sacrifices the exchange, and the pawns march to the eighth rank.
58.♘e4 a6 59.♘xc3 For some reason the computer prefers 59.♖xb6+ ♔xb6 60.♘xc3 ♔c6 61.♘e4.
59...axb5 60.axb5+



60...♔d6 The best practical chance was 60...♔c5 61.♘e4+ ♔xb5 62.♘xf6 ♔c5 63.g5 ♔d6 64.♔g6 ♖b1 65.f5 ♖xb3, when White has to choose between 66.♘h7 b5 67.f6 ♖f3 68.f7 ♔e7 69.f8♕+ ♖xf8 70.♘xf8 b4 71.♘h7 b3 72.♘f6 b2 73.♘d5+ ♔d6 74.♘c3, or the beautiful 66.♘e4+ ♔e5 67.f6 ♔xe4 68.f7 ♖f3 69.♔g7 b5 70.g6 b4 71.f8♕ ♖xf8 72.♔xf8 b3 73.g7 b2 74.g8♕ b1♕ 75.♕g6+.
61.♘e4+ ♔e7 62.♘xf6 ♖d1
After 62...♔f7 White plays 63.♘d5.
63.♔g6 ♖d3 64.f5 ♖d6 65.g5 ♔f8 66.b4



This is a kind of mutual zugzwang position.
66...♖d4 67.♔h6 Or 67.♘h5 ♖xb4 68.♘g7 ♖xb5 69.♘e6+ ♔e7 70.♘d4, winning. **67...♖h4+** Trickier was 67...♖d6 68.♔h7 ♖xf6 69.gxf6 ♔f7 70.♔h8 ♔f8 71.f7! ♔xf7 72.♔h7 ♔f6 73.♔g8 ♔xf5 74.♔f7, and wins.
68.♘h5 ♖xb4 69.g6 ♖g4 70.f6 ♖g1 71.♘f4 ♖e1 72.♘d5 ♖f1 73.♔g5 ♖g1+ 74.♔f5 ♖f1+ 75.♔e6 ♖e1+ 76.♔d6 ♖f1 77.♔c6

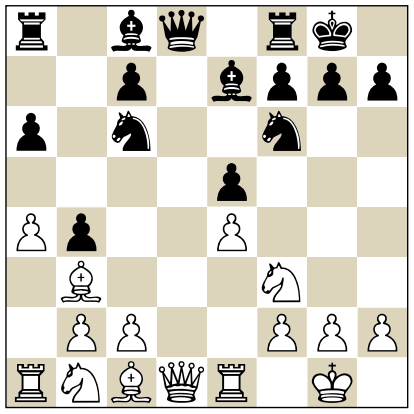


Black resigned. I was awarded the prize for 'Alekhine's technique' for this game.

NOTES BY
Michael Adams

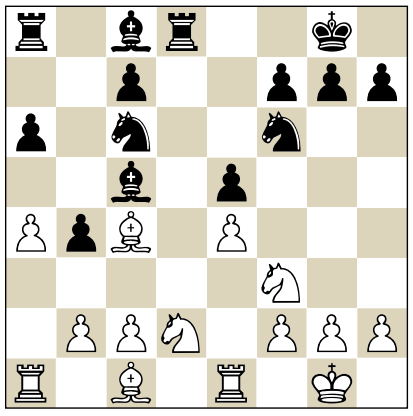
RL 18.2 – C88
Vishy Anand
Michael Adams
Paris/St.Petersburg 2013 (1)

When Dirk Jan asked me to annotate a game from this event, I thought my win against Svidler would be a good choice, but he nudged me in the direction of this game. Perhaps he felt that my annotating the only one of my games that finished before the time-control was inappropriate when many of my games kept him toiling away in the commentary box long into the night.
The other reason I was not too keen to annotate this game was that I remain rather confused as to why I won. Although Vishy made a couple of uncertain moves in the middlegame, they didn't seem mistakes of a sufficient magnitude to lose the game. However, as far as I can see, even with the assistance of the infernal machine, that appears to be the case.
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♖e1
Varying from the popular 6.d3 line which Vishy chose in our game earlier in the year in Baden-Baden.
6...b5 7.♗b3 0-0 8.a4 b4 9.d4 d6 10.dxe5 dxe5



11.♕xd8 ♖xd8 12.♘bd2 ♗c5 13.♗c4
At this stage I began cursing my defective memory, but in fact my homework was to blame as I later discovered this rare but rather logical move

didn't make an appearance in my preparation.



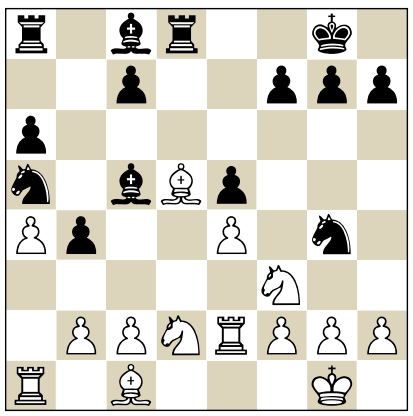
13...♘g4

I thought White had a comfortable position after 13...h6 14.♘b3 ♗a7 15.h3 followed by ♗e3, or 14...♗d6 15.h3 (15.♗e3!?), so I took a deep breath and went for a more principled move. It still seems most appropriate to me, as it crosses White's plans to develop harmoniously. The downside is that my knights remain precariously placed for some time to come.

14.♖e2 I was expecting 14.♖f1 here, as it seemed logical to keep the back rank covered.

14...♘a5 15.♗d5

After 15.♗a2 I was tempted by 15...b3 – a possible line is 16.cxb3 ♘c6 17.h3 ♘xf2 18.♖xf2 ♘b4 19.♘xe5 ♗xf2+ 20.♔xf2 ♘c2 21.♖b1 ♘b4, with a repetition. I was less sure about 15...♖e8 16.♘g5 ♖e7 17.h3 (17.♘df3 h6). Now Black should play 17...♘xf2 18.♖xf2 h6 19.♘gf3 ♗e6, as 17...♘f6 18.♘df3 b3 19.cxb3 ♗b4 20.♗d2 c5 21.♗xb4 cxb4 22.♘d2 looks good for White.



15...♖b8

I was worried that White would successfully untangle after 15...♗b7 16.

NEW IN CHESS

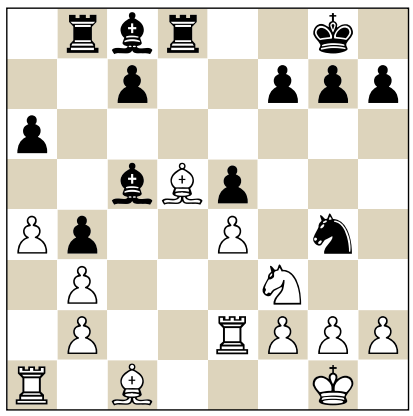
After his win in the London Chess Classic, Mickey Adams also beat Vishy Anand in the Alekhine Memorial.

♗xb7 ♘xb7 17.h3 ♘xf2 (17...♘f6 18.♘xe5) 18.♖xf2 f6 19.♔f1 ♗xf2 20.♔xf2 ♖d6, although this is not that clear.

I was also reluctant to play 15...c6, although after 16.♗a2 ♖e8 17.♘g5 ♖a7 the positive side to that move is revealed.

16.♘b3 Vishy complicates the game, as 16.h3 ♘f6 17.♗a2 ♖e8 (or 17...♘c6) 18.♘g5 ♖e7 is fairly harmless.

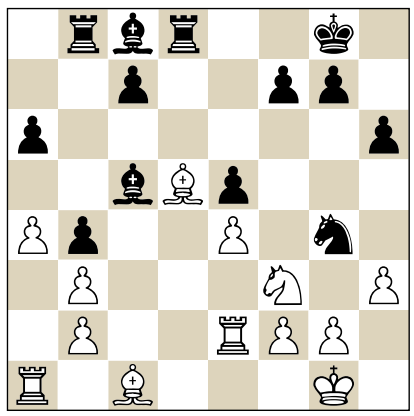
16...♘xb3 17.cxb3



17...h6 I was initially enticed by the other options, but on closer inspection realized that 17...♗b7 18.♗g5 ♖xd5 19.exd5 f6 20.♗e3 ♘xe3 21.fxe3 ♗xd5 22.♘d2 allows White to press, and in the line 17...c6 18.♗g5 cxd5 (18...♖d6 has to be played) 19.♗xd8 dxe4 20.♘xe5 ♘xe5, 21.♗c7 was an unpleasant surprise.

18.h3

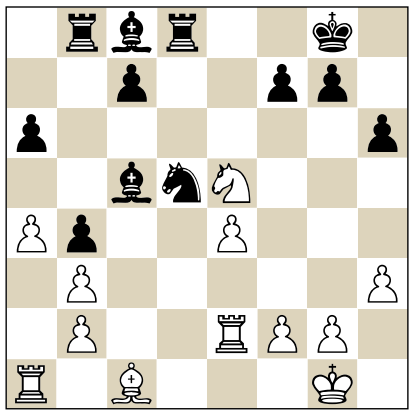
I was happy to see this move, having become concerned that 18.♗e3 could be a problem, as 18...♘xe3 19.fxe3 ♖e8 20.♖c1 looked rather unpleasant. However, the correct 18...♗xe3 19.fxe3 ♗b7 20.♗xb7 ♖xb7 21.♖c1 ♘f6 is balanced, as both sides have a number of vulnerable foot soldiers.



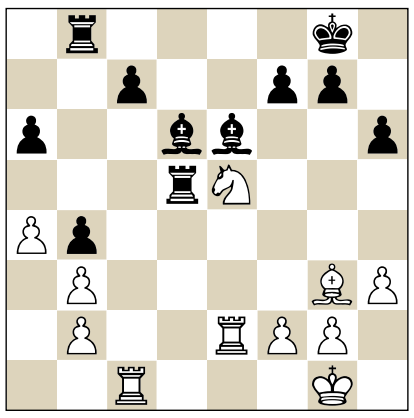
18...♘f6

The computer manages to salvage the line 18...c6 19.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 20.hxg4 ♖d1+ 21.♔h2 ♗d4 22.♘xd4 (22.g5 ♗e6) 22...exd4 23.f3 ♗e6 24.♖d2 ♖xd2 25.♗xd2 ♗xb3, but at the board it looked distinctly dodgy.

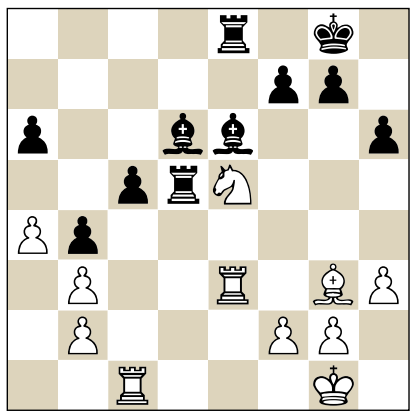
19.♘xe5 ♘xd5



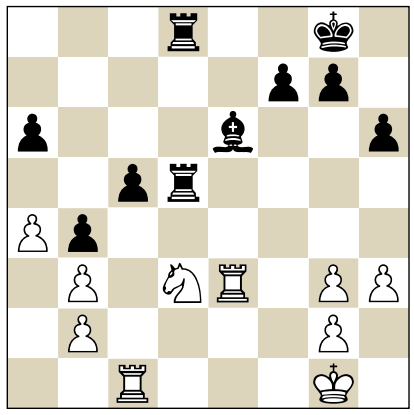
20.exd5
Around here I think Vishy began thinking about securing the draw, and decided it was safer to bail out of his original intention 20.♘c6, but it was the best move: 20...♘c3 21.bxc3 ♖d1+ 22.♔h2 ♖b6 23.cxb4 (23.♘xb4 a5 24.♘d5 ♖xb3 leaves White having to play accurately to hold) 23...♗d6+ (I was also thinking about 23...♗f8 24.b5 axb5 25.axb5 ♗b7 but White has no problems for instance 26.♘a5) 24.e5 ♖xc6 25.exd6 ♗e6, with a draw on the cards.
20...♖xd5
With material level Black is quite comfortable, but it shouldn't be too serious.
21.♗f4
Necessary, as 21.♘c6 ♖d1+ 22.♔h2 ♗d6+ is unwise.
21...♗e6 22.♖c1 ♗d6 23.♗g3



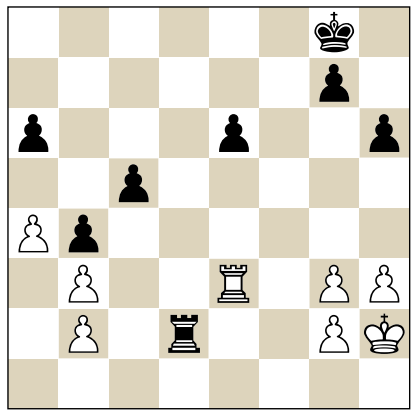
23...♖e8
I justifiably felt I should be more ambitious than 23...c5 24.♘c6 ♖b6 (24...♖c8 25.♘xb4 cxb4 26.♖xc8+ ♗xc8 27.♖e8+ ♔h7 28.♖xc8 is an immediate draw) 25.♘a5. The position remains a bit uncomfortable for White, with my light-squared bishop eyeballing his pawn on b3.
24.♖e3
Now 24.♘c6 is met by 24...a5. I was expecting the immediate 24.♘f3, and given the difficulties in improving White's play later on, this looks sensible.
24...c5



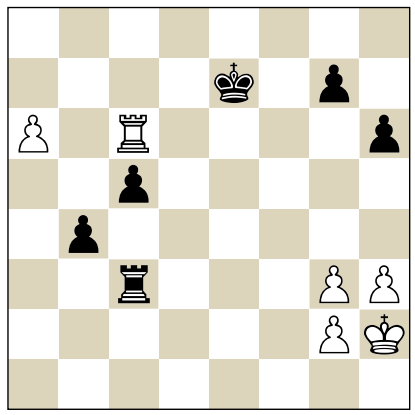
25.♘d3
After 25.♘f3 ♗e7, retaining the bishop pair, Black's advantage grows. However, 25.♘c6 was definitely a better idea, as 25...♗f8 can be met by the tricky 26.♘b8; instead, 25...♗xg3 26.fxg3 ♔f8 keeps some pressure.
This looks like a key moment, as the play now gets very forcing and it is surprisingly hard to find better options for my adversary in the variations that follow right until the end.
25...♗xg3 26.fxg3 ♖ed8



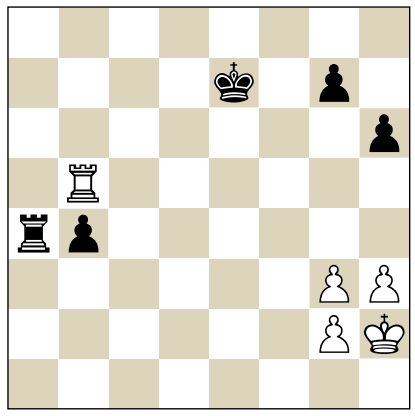
27.♘f4
Necessary, as 27.♘xc5 ♖c8 wins a piece.
27...♖d1+ 28.♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 29.♔h2
After 29.♔f2 I realized 29...♖d2+ (29...♖b1 is also good) 30.♖e2 ♖xe2+ 31.♔xe2 ♗xb3 32.a5 ♔f8 should win.
29...♖d2 30.♘xe6 fxe6



31.♖xe6 31.♖e5 is no improvement, as after 31...♖c2, 32.♖xe6 ♖xb2 transposes to the game. **31...♖xb2 32.♖xa6** After 32.♖c6 ♖xb3 33.♖xc5 ♖c3 my rook is able to get behind the passed pawn: 34.♖a5 (34.♖d5 ♖c8) 34...♖c6. **32...♖xb3 33.♖c6 ♖c3 34.a5 ♔f7 35.a6 ♔e7**



36.a7 After 36.g4 ♔d7 37.a7 ♖a3 38.♖xc5 ♖xa7 39.♖b5 ♖a4 40.g5 ♔c6 leads to the position in the note to 39.g4.
36...♖a3 37.♖xc5 ♖xa7 38.♖b5
Not 38.g4 ♖b7. **38...♖a4**



39.♖b7+ Capturing the pawn seems correct, the alternative 39.g4 ♔d6 40.g5 (40.♔g3 ♔c6 41.♖b8 ♔c5) 40...♔c6 41.♖b8 hxg5 42.♔g3 ♔c5 43.♔g4 b3+ 44.♔xg5 ♖b4 45.♖c8+ ♔d4 46.♖c1 b2 47.

CHESSBASE 12

Start your personal success story now. ChessBase 12 is the chess database program which has become the world-wide standard. Get to know your next opponent'sweak points and exploit the advantage of targeted preparation. Enjoy the new ChessBase 12 program with fantastic new analysis and search features!

New in ChessBase 12:

"Deep analysis" generates a dynamic tree of variations. Leave the analysis running as long as you want. The longer the running time, the more reliable the variations displayed. Variations which do not hold up at the greater depth of calculation are automatically excluded. The result is commentary containing analysis of the important candidate moves. Strong improvement over the deep position analysis in Fritz, because it can run forever, all the while adapting the variation tree with ever-increasing depth.

Team up engines from different systems in a **"Cloud analysis".** This is a deep analysis done by several engines working in parallel, which saves an enormous amount of time. The engines are running on other computers, where they can be set up with a few clicks. You can even make the engines undertake different tasks: one engine always directs the analysis. Another spends all its time calculating the candidate moves in the starting position, in order to obtain the optimal depth of calculation. Then there is one or more other engines which are looking for the replies to each of the candidate moves etc.

"Similarity search": In ChessBase 12 endings can now be looked for with a single click and displayed classified according to their similarity to the position on the board. Access to a whole heap of endings with the same distribution of material on modern 64-Bit systems is gained in a few seconds only. And what works with endgames can also be transferred to middlegame positions. In this case too, a search is instigated for pawn structures which are almost similar to the position on the board and the similarity is considered on the basis of the position of the pieces.

More improvements:

- Online player encyclopedia with Elo ratings, upgraded throughout the year
- "Let'Check": access the world's largest database of in-depth analysis (more than 5 million positions)*
- Optional 64Bit version: speeds up access to your databases
- Intelligent google-style search box for the ChessBase online database with now more than 6,4 million games*
- New look for the ChessMedia window, big database symbols for high resolution
- New engine dialog with CPU-optimisation
- One-click publication of one or more games on the web in a Java script.

System requirements: Minimum: Minimum: Pentium III 1 GHz, 1 GB RAM, Windows Vista, XP (Service Pack 3), DirectX9 graphics card with 256 MB RAM, DVD-ROM drive, Windows Media Player 9 and Internet access to activate the program, Playchess.com, Let's Check, Engine Cloud and updates.

Recommended: PC Intel Core i7, 2.8 GHz, 4 GB RAM, Windows 7 (64 Bit) or Windows 8 (64 Bit), DirectX10 graphics card (or compatible) with 512 MB RAM or more, 100% DirectX10 compatible sound card, Windows Media Player 11, DVD ROM drive and Internet access to activate the program, Playchess.com, Let's Check, Engine Cloud and updates.

ChessBase 12 - Starter package 179,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Big Database 2013**
- **Games download until 31st December 2013**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.4 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Half a Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine (3 issues)**

ChessBase 12 - Mega package 269,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Mega Database 2013**
- **Games download until 31st December 2013**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.4 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine (6 issues)**

ChessBase 12 - Premium package 369,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Premium membership on playchess.com (1 year)**
- **Mega Database 2013**
- **Games download until 31st December 2013**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.4 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine**
- **Corr Database 2013 + Endgame Turbo 3 (9 DVDs)**

ChessBase 12 - Upgrade from 11 99,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 program**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.4 million games)***

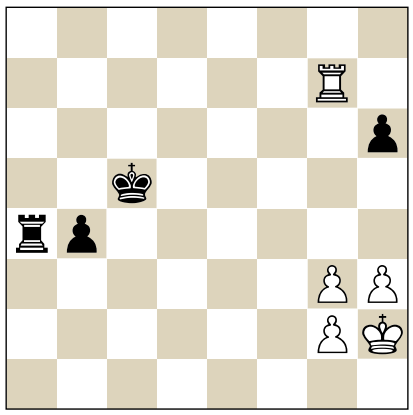
Only after you have returned your CB11 registration number!

*) the service lasts till 31.12.2015

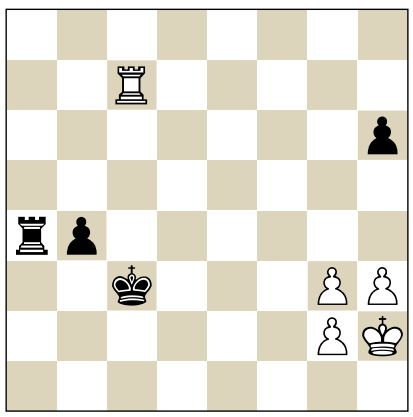
CHESSBASE GMBH · OSTERBEKSTRASSE 90A · D-22083 HAMBURG · TEL ++(49) 40/639060-12 · FAX ++(49) 40/6301282 · WWW.CHESSBASE.COM · INFO@CHESSBASE.COM

CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar · phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · **WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM**

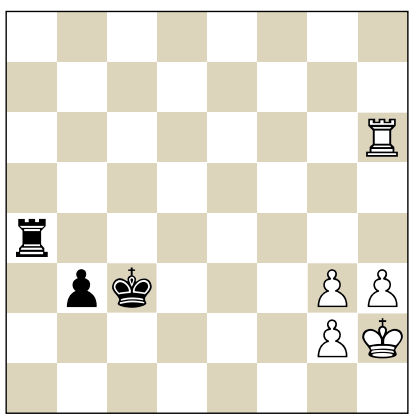
♖b1 ♔c3 48.♔g6 ♔c2 clearly loses.
39...♔d6 40.♖xg7 ♔c5



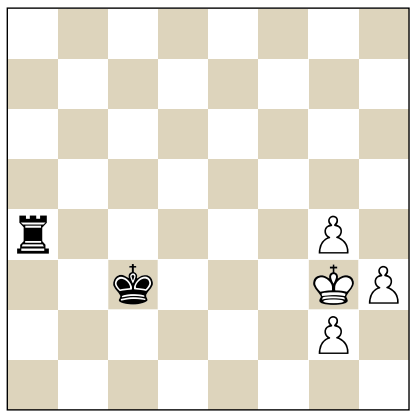
41.♖c7+ Having reached the time-control it gradually dawned on me that White's cause is already hopeless. Checking seems logical, as 41.♖b7 ♖a6 42.♔g1 ♖b6 43.♖xb6 ♔xb6 44.♔f2 b3 leaves White unable to stop the pawn.
41...♔d4 42.♖d7+ ♔c3 43.♖c7+ ♔d3 44.♖b7 ♔c3 45.♖c7+



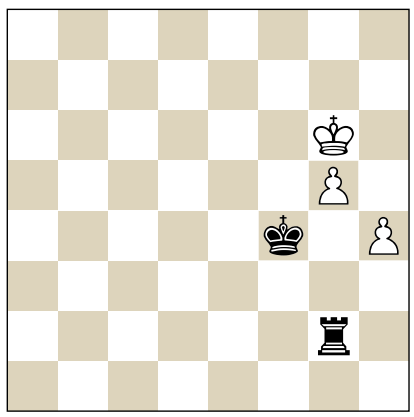
45...♔b2 Although my king has been forced to temporarily impede the pawn, the loss of time is not significant.
46.♖c6 The only try, as 46.g4 b3 47.♔g3 ♔a2 48.♔h4 b2 49.♖b7 ♖a5 doesn't help. **46...b3 47.♖xh6 ♔c3**



48.♖b6 It was slightly better and more practical to play 48.♖f6 here: 48...b2 49.♖f3+ ♔c4 50.♖f4+ ♔b3 (50...♔b5 51.♖f5+ ♔b6 52.♖f6+ and the black king will have to head back up the board) 51.♖f3+ ♔a2 52.♖f2 ♔a1 53.♖f1+ b1♕ 54.♖xb1+ ♔xb1 (White now has a slightly improved version of the game, as my king is on b1 instead of b2, although this shouldn't change the result) 55.g4 ♔c2 56.♔g3 ♔d3 57.♔f3 ♖e4 58.g5 ♔d4 59.g6 (59.g4 ♔e5 60.g6 ♖f4+ 61.♔g3 ♖f6) 59...♖e6.
48...b2 49.♖xb2 The pawn must be captured due to 49.h4 ♖b4.
49...♔xb2 50.g4 ♔c3 51.♔g3



51...♖e4 I accurately calculated this move, clearing a path for my king to retreat, as a clear win, but there are other strong options, e.g. 51...♔d4 52.♔f4 ♔d5+ 53.♔f5 ♖a2 54.h4 ♖f2+ 55.♔g6 ♖xg2 56.g5 ♔e6 57.h5 ♔e7 58.h6 ♔f8. **52.♔h4** 52.♔f3 ♔d4 is straightforward. **52...♔d4 53.♔g5 ♔e5 54.♔g6 ♖e2 55.g5 ♖xg2 56.h4 ♔f4**



White resigned, as Black's king soon hoovers up the white pawns: 57.♔f7 ♔f5 controls everything, and Black's king is in time after 57.♔f6 ♔g4 58.g6 ♔h5 59.g7 ♔h6.

NOTES BY
Laurent Fressinet

QP 9.9 – A07
Vladimir Kramnik
Laurent Fressinet
Paris/St.Petersburg 2013 (5)

To understand my opening choice, I think it is important to describe what happened the previous day. I played a very long game against Michael Adams and got a completely winning position just before the time-control, which I failed to convert in the end (Michael's tenacity also had something to do with it!). After more than six hours of play I had to agree to a draw. Right after the game I confessed my tiredness and frustration to my second, the young and talented Hungarian Richard Rapport. I also told him

'I hate to create chaos from the first few opening moves.'

that I didn't want to end up in a long positional struggle against Vladimir. I am fully aware of Vladimir's ability to torture his opponents in these types of positions. I used to be his second after all ☺. The accumulated tiredness in the first four Parisian days would probably not allow me to save the half point. I hate to create chaos from the first few opening moves. Richard's answer was immediate: 'He will probably play the Réti. Play the Chigorin against it!' To be honest, I was not convinced at all by his suggestion, but lacking a better idea I asked him to check it out. Richard spent the whole

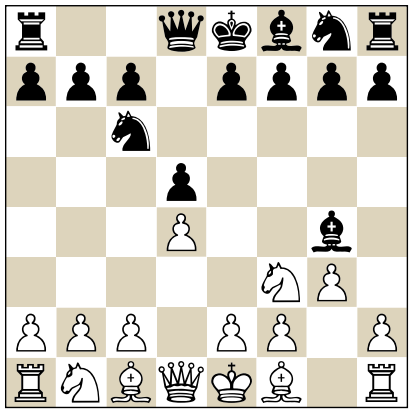
night checking, and the next morning, after having read his file, I was already much more confident.

1.♘f3 d5 2.g3

The Réti, as expected. As weird as it might seem, in Paris we anticipated all of my opponents' opening choices, and in St. Petersburg none!

2...♘c6 3.d4 ♗g4

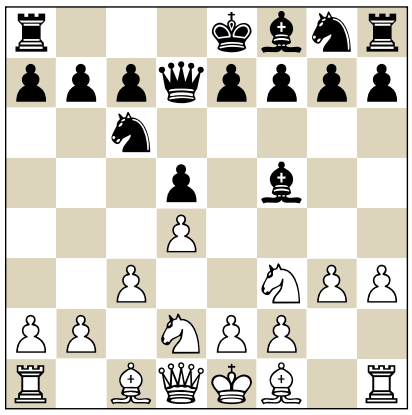
3...♗f5 is the other option, but according to Richard it is weaker.



4.♘bd2!? The best move, in my opinion. There is no hurry to castle. White wants to play on the queenside with c3, b4. 4.♗g2 is the natural and most common move.

4...♕d7 5.h3 ♗f5 6.c3

I spent a lot of time here and I was already very worried! If I don't do anything concrete, White will play b4-b5 and get a very comfortable position.



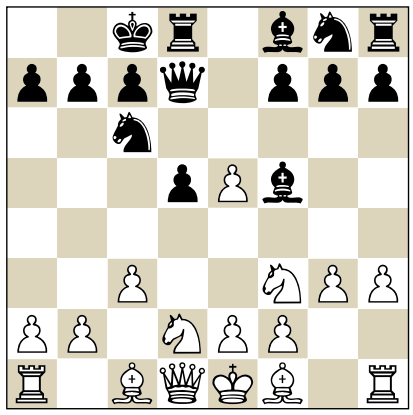
6...e5!?

Played in the spirit of the Albin Counter-Gambit. I was not really convinced by the compensation for the sacrificed pawn but I failed to find anything else. 6...f6 is too slow: 7.b4 e5 (on 7...a6 comes 8.♘h4! – Black doesn't want to give up his light-squared bishop) 8.b5 ♘d8 9.dxe5.

7.dxe5

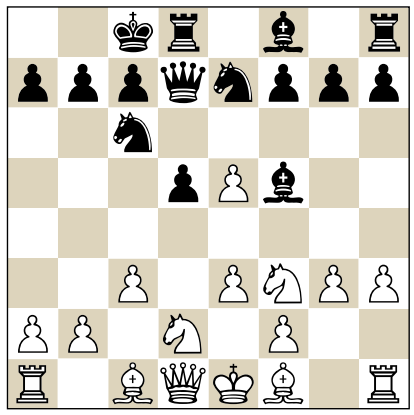
7.♘xe5!? is probably more precise. Now it is very complicated to prove real compensation for the pawn: 7...♘xe5 8.dxe5 0-0-0 9.♗g2 ♘e7 (9...f6 10.♘f3) 10.♘b3 ♘c6 11.♘d4! ♘xe5 12.g4 ♗g6 13.f4 c5 14.fxe5 (14.♘b3 ♗e4! is unclear) 14...cxd4 15.cxd4, and White is clearly better.

7...0-0-0



8.e3? The first mistake, which immediately gives Black a decent position. 8.♘b3! f6 (8...♘ge7 transposes to the line mentioned in the previous note: 9.♗g2 ♘g6 10.♘bd4 ♘gxe5 11.♘xe5 ♘xe5 12.g4 ♗g6 13.f4 c5 14.fxe5 cxd4 15.cxd4) 9.♘bd4 fxe5 10.♘xc6 ♕xc6 11.♘xe5 ♕e8 12.♘f3 ♘f6 13.♗g2, and Black has some compensation for the sacrificed pawn, but I don't think it's sufficient.

8...♘ge7 8...f6?! 9.♗b5 is probably the reason why Vladimir played 8.e3 instead of 8.♘b3.



9.g4? A mistake never comes alone, and this game is no exception. I already prefer Black.

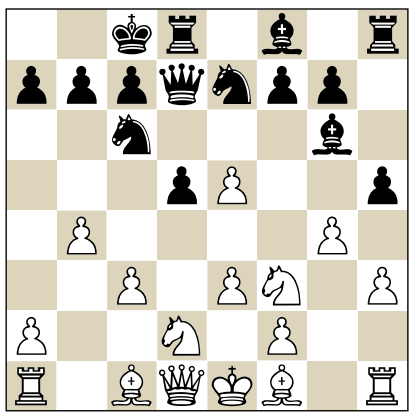
After 9.b4 ♘g6 10.♗b5 ♕e6 (10...a6 11.♗a4 b5 12.♗c2 ♘gxe5 13.a4 looked too dangerous) 11.♘d4 ♘xd4 12.exd4 ♗xh3 (after 12...f6?! 13.g4 ♗e4 14.♘xe4 dxe4 15.♕e2 White is better) the position is very sharp, but Black's chances are no worse.

9...♗g6 10.b4 h5!

Of course! I have to play for the initiative. I already didn't see any satisfying option for White.

Laurent Fressinet was overwhelmed by emotions after his brilliant win over Vladimir Kramnik, a feat that earned him a special prize for the best attack 'in Alekhine's style'.

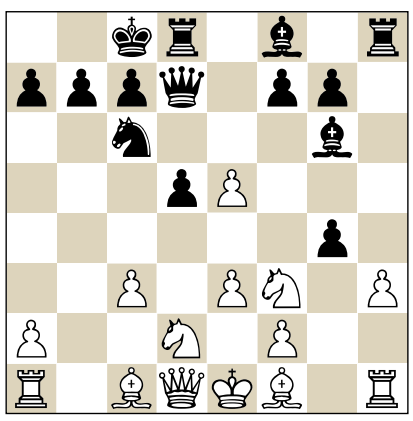
BORIS DOLMATOVKSY



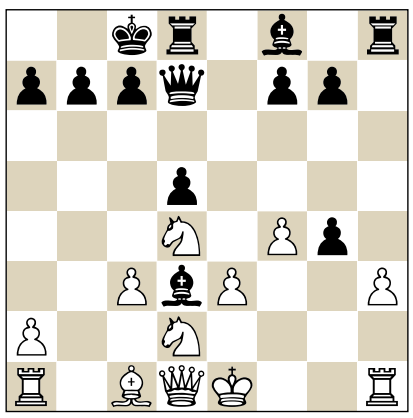
11.b5 I was expecting 11.♖g1, but after 11...hxg4 12.hxg4 f6 13.exf6 gxf6 followed by ...♗g7 or ...♘e5, Black's compensation is obvious.

11...hxg4! I think Vladimir had missed this move. Nevertheless it is the only move and Black gets excellent compensation for the sacrificed piece.

12.bxc6 ♘xc6



13.e6 13.♘d4 ♘xe5 14.f4 gxf3! (better than 14...♘d3+, the move I had planned: 15.♗xd3 ♗xd3



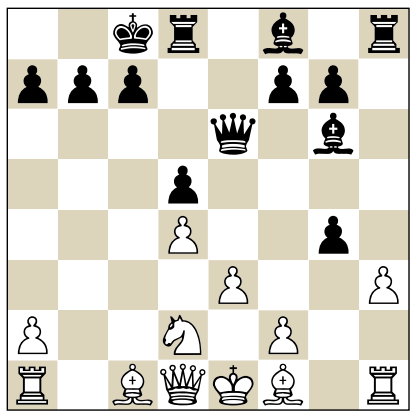
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

16.♘2f3! – I missed that move during the game – 16...♗e4 17.♘e5 ♕e8 18.♕xg4+ ♔b8 19.♖g1, and the position is extremely sharp) 15.♘2xf3 ♘c4!, and once again the compensation for the sacrificed piece is excellent.

13...♕xe6

Bad is 13...fxe6? 14.♖g1!, as mentioned by Grischuk after the game, and suddenly White is better.

14.♘d4 ♘xd4 15.cxd4



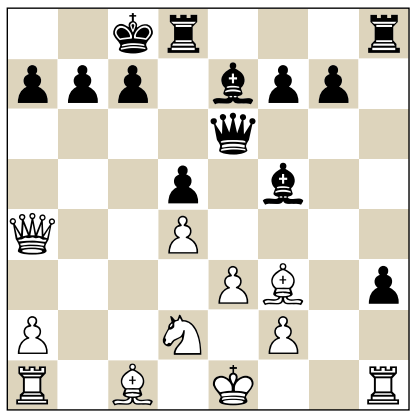
15...♗e7

I spent a lot of time calculating the following line: 15...♗b4!? 16.♕b3 ♗xd2+ 17.♗xd2 ♗e4 18.♖h2 ♕d6 19.f4 gxf3 20.♖f2 ♕g3. The rook is pinned and it is annoying for White, but I didn't see the exact follow-up. Finally I decided in favour of the text-move, with the idea of involving another piece in the attack. The bishop is going to h4 and will target the f2-pawn... which in the end proved to be decisive!

16.♗g2 gxh3 17.♗f3 ♗f5

The idea is to push the g-pawn.

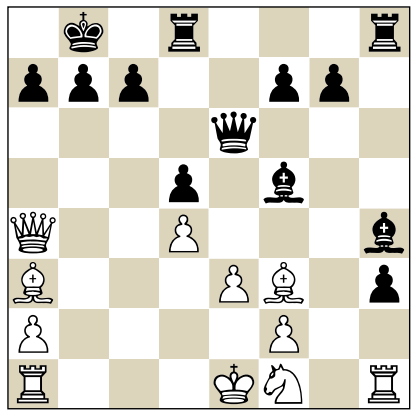
18.♕a4



18...♔b8

18...♖d6 was tempting, but 19.♗e2! (19.♕xa7?? ♖a6 wins the queen) 19...♔b8 20.♗a3 forces the exchange of one minor piece, which I wanted to avoid.

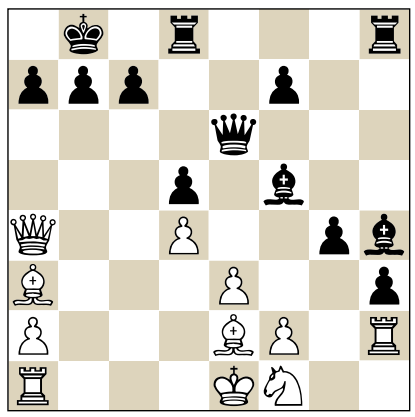
19.♗a3 ♗h4 20.♘f1



20...g5

20...♗d3! was even stronger: 21.♖h2 ♖h6! – I had missed this idea: the rook comes into the game with decisive effect.

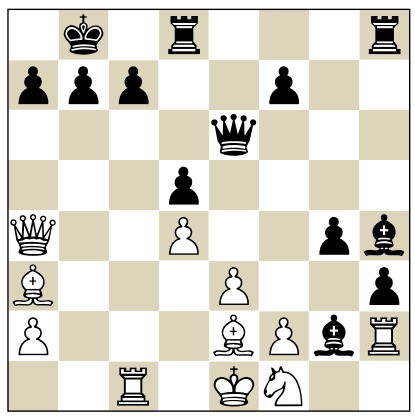
21.♖h2 g4 22.♗e2



22...♗e4

The idea is to trap the rook on h2 with ♗g2! It is not a bad idea but the 'primitive' 22...♖dg8! was winning by force: 23.♕b4 g3 24.fxg3 ♗xg3+ 25.♘xg3 ♖xg3, with mate to follow.

23.♖c1 ♗g2

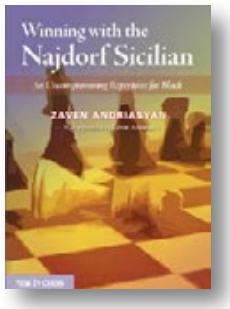


24.♕a5

24.♕c2 was more resilient: 24...♖c8 25.♕d2 ♖h6!, followed by 26...♖f6, and Black has an enduring initiative.

24...♖c8 25.♖c3

BESTSELLERS
New In Chess Online Shop



1

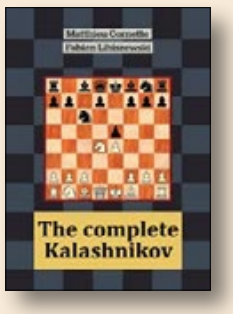
Winning with the Najdorf Sicilian
An Uncompromising Repertoire for Black
by Zaven Andriasyan

Complete, surprising, punchy

6

Naroditsky's Master Classes
Positional Play & Complex Endgames at a 20% Discount!
by Daniel Naroditsky

"Naroditsky is really a mature author for his young age!" Karsten Müller



2

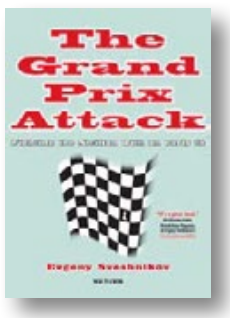
The Complete Kalashnikov
New ideas and countless novelties
by Matthieu Cornette & Fabien Libiszewski

"Novelties abound." Glenn Flear, Yearbook 106

7

Saitek Competition Game Clock
Stylish, many options & durable

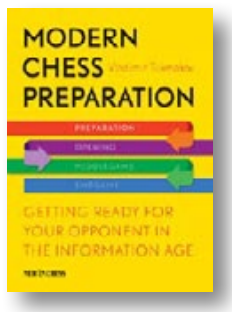
Just as good, only much cheaper!



3

The Grand Prix Attack
Fighting the Sicilian with an early f4
by Evgeny Sveshnikov

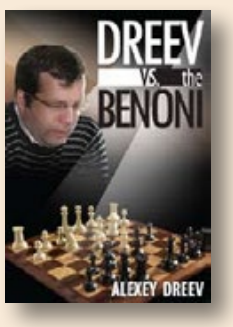
The GPA, finally taken seriously!



8

Modern Chess Preparation
Getting Ready for Your Opponent in the Information Age
by Vladimir Tukmakov

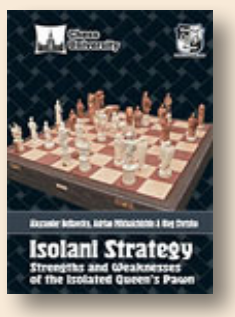
"Exhilarating reading." Jeremy Silman



4

Dreev vs. the Benoni
The Best Move Orders for White
by Alexey Dreev

A wealth of novelties



9

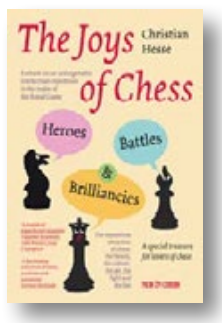
Isolani Strategy
Strengths and Weaknesses of the Isolated Queen's Pawn
by Beliavsky, Stetsko & Mikhalchishin

"There is not much better currently in print." ChessCafe

5

Vassily Ivanchuk
100 Selected Games
by Nikolay Kalinichenko

Brilliant chess from Planet Ivanchuk!

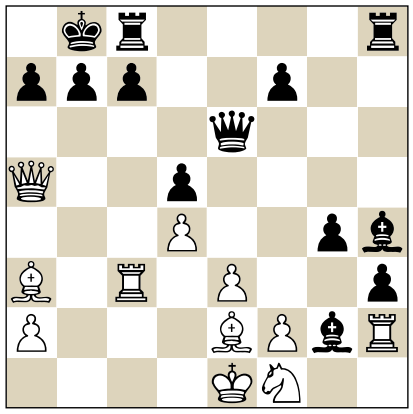


10

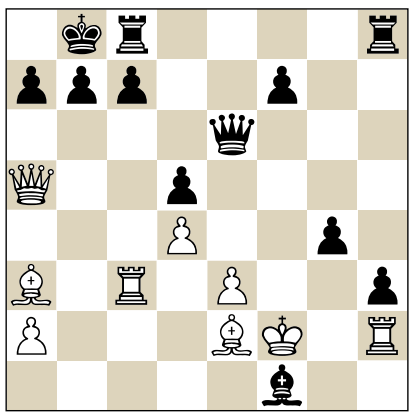
The Joys of Chess
Heroes, Battles & Brilliancies
by Christian Hesse

"A bargain and a treat." Andy Soltis, New York Post

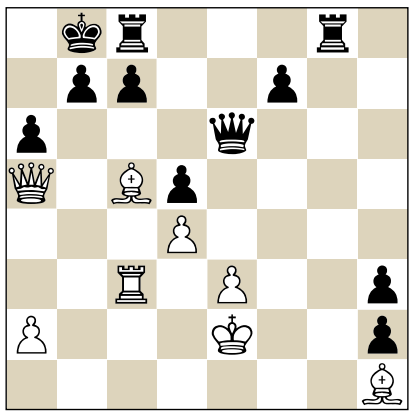
For a sweeping variety of more than 2,000 chess products go to www.newinchess.com



Find the trick!
25...♗xf2+! 26.♔xf2 ♗xf1



27.♔xf1 27.♗xf1 g3+ 28.♔xg3 ♕f5! (I saw this when calculating 25...♗xf2! and understood that White's king could no longer escape) 29.♖b2 (29.♖xh3 ♖cg8+ 30.♔h2 ♕f2+ 31.♔h1 ♕g1 mate) 29...♖cg8+ 30.♔h2 ♖g2+ 31.♗xg2 hxg2+ 32.♔xg2 ♖g8+ 33.♔h1 ♕f3+ 34.♔h2 ♕h5 mate. **27...g3 28.♗f3 gxh2 29.♔e2 ♖hg8!** The rook joins the attack and the h-pawn will queen. **30.♗c5 a6 31.♗h1**

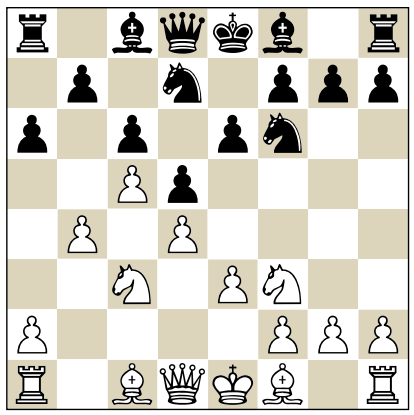


31...♖g2+ 32.♗xg2 Vladimir resigned before I could play 32...hxg2.
I was overwhelmed by my emotions after this victory, and even more so I won in Paris, my home city, in Alekhine's style ☺.

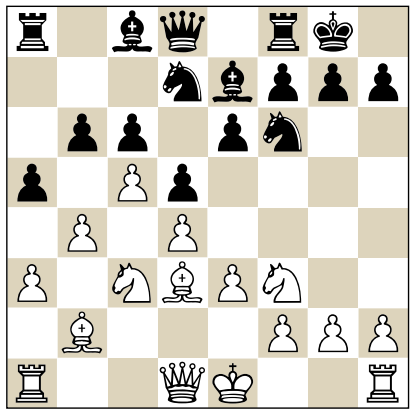
NOTES BY
Ding Liren

SL 8.1 – D45
Ding Liren
Levon Aronian
Paris/St.Petersburg 2013 (1)

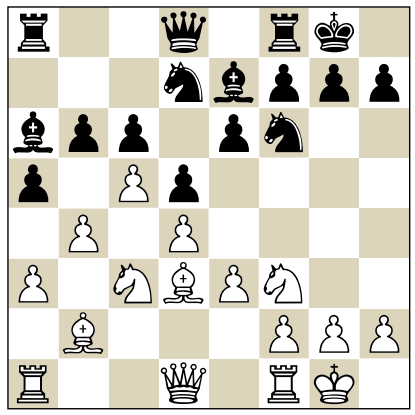
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.e3 e6 6.c5 ♘bd7 7.b4



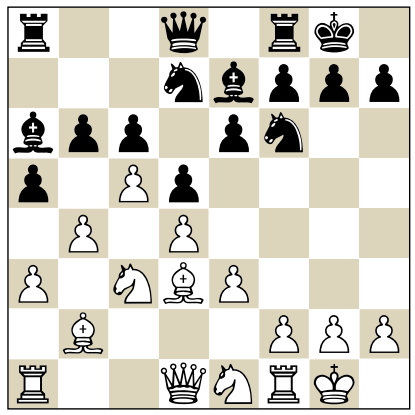
7...b6
The old main line in this variation is 7...g6, of which I have some sweet memories.
8.♗b2 a5 9.a3
If White plays 9.b5 instead, Black will replay with 9...♗b7.
9...♗e7 10.♗d3 0-0



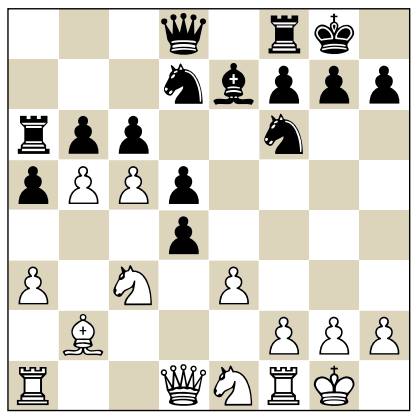
11.0-0
If I want to prevent Black's next move by playing 11.♕e2, Black can liberate himself after 11...axb4 12.axb4 ♖xa1+ 13.♗xa1 bxc5 14.bxc5 by the central push 14...e5.
11...♗a6
In case of 11...♗b7 White continues 12.♕e2.



12.♘e1
And this is my idea! I want to put my knight on d3, from where it will have huge influence on the centre.
12.♗xa6 ♖xa6 13.b5 looks ambitious, but after 13...cxb5 14.c6 ♘b8 15.♘e5 ♘e8 with 16...f6 to follow, Black is doing fine.



12...♗c4
Levon spent some three or four minutes on this move, but I think it gives me a long-term advantage.
The immediate 12...e5 is risky: 13.♗xa6 ♖xa6 14.b5 exd4 (the only move). And now, instead of capturing the rook, White has a very strong move:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

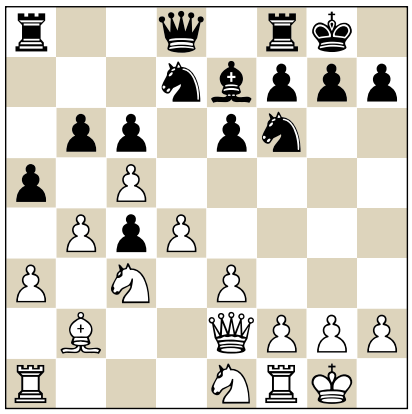
15.♘xd5, when one possible line is 15...cxb5 16.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 17.c6 dxe3 18.fxe3 ♕xe3+ 19.♔h1 ♘e5 20.♘f3, and White has the initiative.
Alternatively, 12...♗b7 seems interesting, but after 13.♘a4 (to prevent 13...e5) 13...♕c7 14.♕e2, White is going to play ♘f3 again.
Maybe it was safer to play 12...♕c7 13.♕e2 ♗xd3 14.♘xd3 ♘e4.

13.♗xc4

Otherwise ...b5 will come.

13...dxc4 14.♕e2

It's important to force Black to block the queenside, so that I can push my central pawns.



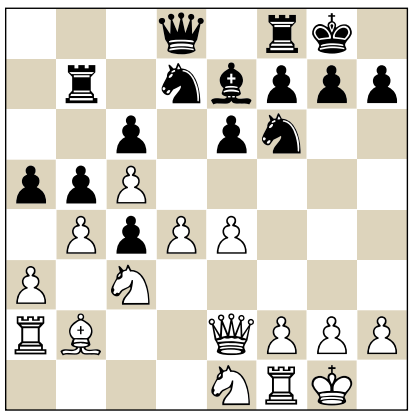
14...♖b8

I think it's better for Black to play 14...b5 15.e4 axb4 16.axb4 ♖xa1 17.♗xa1 ♘b8 18.♘c2 ♘a6 19.♗b2 ♘c7, when after the exchange of a pair of rooks Black's pieces may have a breath of fresh air.

15.♖a2

15.♖b1 is more logical here, but during the game I was afraid of some tactics.
I thought that after he played 15...b5, I would be able to break the queenside by a4 at some point.

15...b5 16.e4 ♖b7

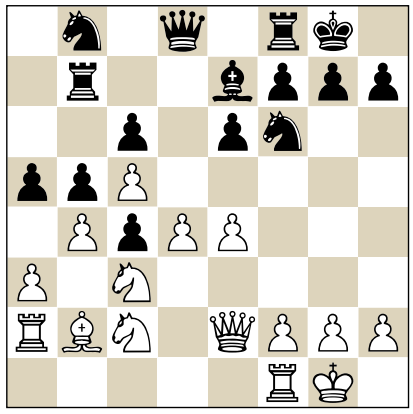


NEW IN CHESS

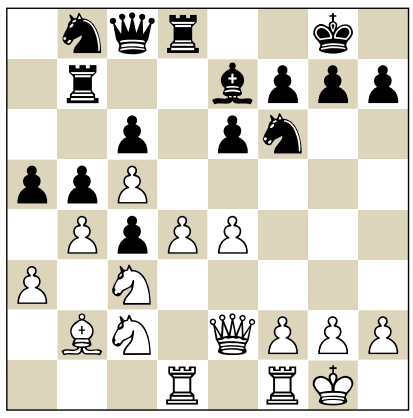
From Paris to St.Petersburg. Ding Liren and his coach Li Wenliang have taken their seats in the comfortable plane that took players, staff and journalists to Russia.

A very interesting plan. With this move he wants to regroup his pieces.

17.♘c2 ♘b8



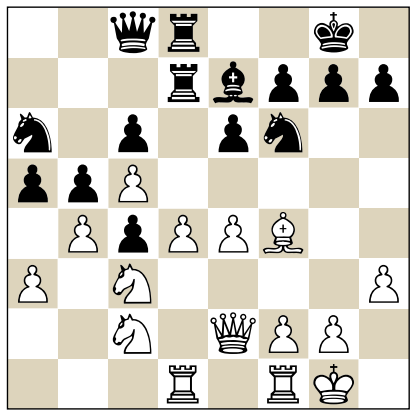
18.♖aa1 I rejected the immediate 18.♗c1 because of 18...♘a6 19.♗f4 ♖d7 and Black threatens 20...♖xd4. But I overlooked 20.♕f3, with the idea of 21.♗d6. **18...♕c8 19.♖ad1 ♖d8**



20.♗c1 Another way to launch an attack is 20.f4, but I preferred to transfer the bishop to f4.

20...♘a6 21.♗f4 ♖bd7 22.h3

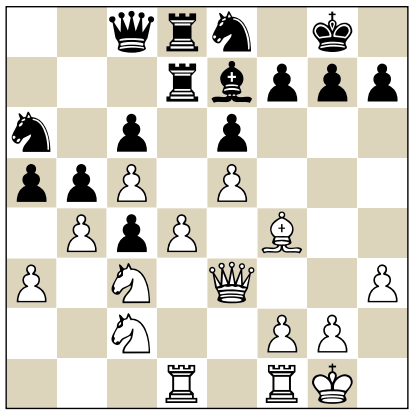
The computer suggests 22.bxa5, followed by ♘a2 and ♘ab4, but it's really hard to make such a decision.



22...♘e8 Here 22...axb4 23.axb4 ♘xb4 24.♘xb4 ♖xd4 25.♖xd4 ♖xd4 26.♗e3 e5 looks pretty, but it fails to 27.♗xd4 exd4 28.e5, and White wins.

23.♕e3 ♗f6 A brave move and actually the best one! Black gives up two tempi and allows me to put my knight on d6, but he gets the strong d5-square as compensation.
Other continuations, e.g. 23...♘ac7 24.♖d2 f6 25.♖fd1 or 23...f6 24.d5, would be too passive.

24.e5 ♗e7

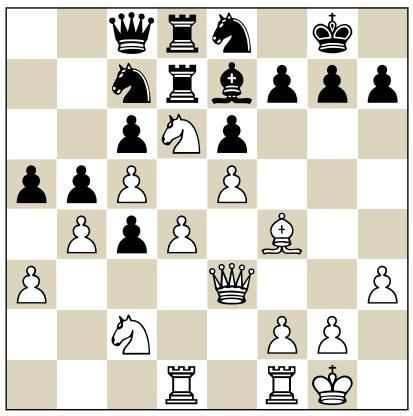


25.♘e4 I should have played 25.bxa5 ♘ec7 26.♕f3 ♘d5 27.♗d2, but who can resist the temptation to attack?

25...♘ac7

25...♘ec7 was another option and may have been better: 26.♕g3 axb4 27.♗h6 g6 28.axb4 ♘d5 29.♕f3 ♖a7 30.♘d6 ♗xd6 31.exd6 ♖dd7, and Black's position remains solid.

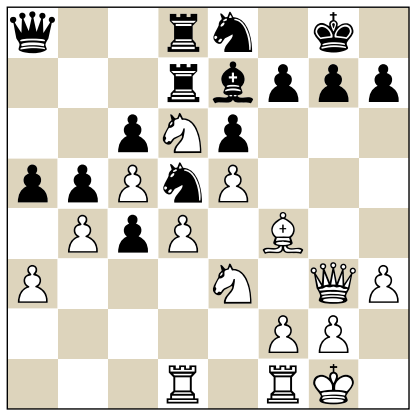
26.♘d6



26...♕a8 After 26...♗xd6 27.cxd6 the knight on e8 is stupid.

27.♕g3 ♘d5 On 27...axb4 I wanted to play 28.axb4 ♕a4 29.♘e3 ♕xb4 30.♘g4 ♕b3 31.♗e3, but I had missed 31...f5. Better is 28.♘xb4, and White is clearly better.

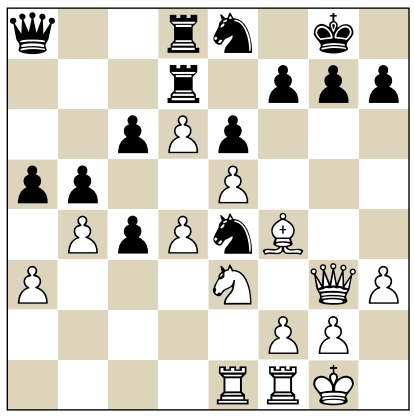
28.♘e3



28...♘c3 Surprisingly, this turns out to be a serious mistake. He should have taken on d6 first.

White is clearly better after 28...♘ec7 29.♗h6 ♗f8 30.♘g4 ♔h8 31.♗g5 ♖b8 32.♖a1 with ♗d2 coming next.

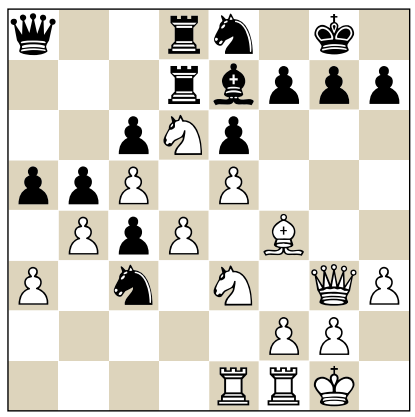
So, he should have played 28...♗xd6 29.cxd6 (in case of 29.exd6, 29...♘xf4 is the point: 30.♕xf4 axb4 31.axb4 ♘f6) 29...♘c3 30.♖de1 ♘e4,



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

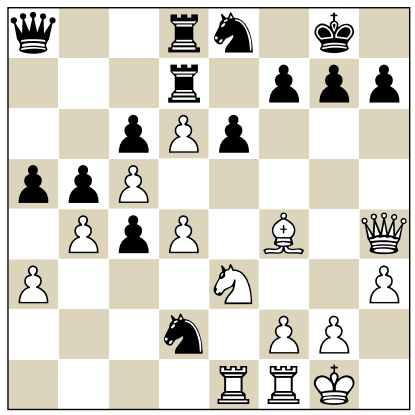
and now I would need to find 31.♕g4 ♘d2 32.♘d5 ♘xf1 33.♘b6 ♕a7 34.♘xd7 ♕xd7 35.bxa5 ♖a8 36.♖xf1 ♖xa5 37.♕f3 with the plan ♗d2-b4 and then push the kingside pawns.

29.♖de1 I thought I was much better, but I had missed his next move.



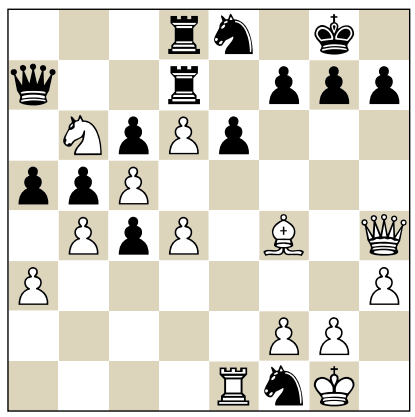
29...♗xd6 This first made me nervous, then I calmed down and realized I was better anyway.

30.exd6 ♘e4 31.♕h4 ♘d2



32.♘d5 The only move that won't lose material! But there is a more beautiful line: 32.d5 cxd5 33.♘f5 ♘xf1 34.♘e7+ ♔h8 (34...♖xe7 35.♕xe7) 35.♔xf1, and it's White who stands better!

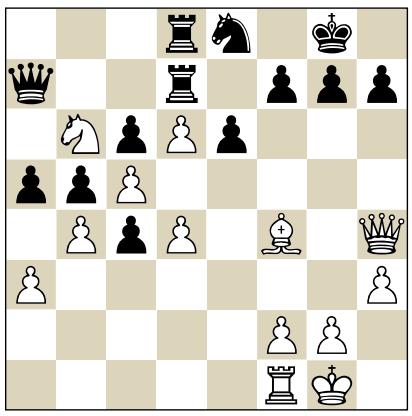
32...♘xf1 32...♘f3+ is met by 33.gxf3 cxd5 34.♔h2. **33.♘b6** 33.♘e7+ doesn't work, due to 33...♖xe7 34.♕xe7 ♘f6. **33...♕a7**



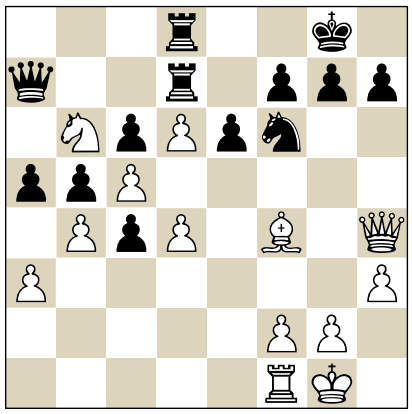
Paris/St.Petersburg — cat. XX

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		TPR
1	Levon Aronian	IGM	ARM	2809	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	0	1	5½	2818
2	Boris Gelfand	IGM	ISR	2739	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	5½	2826
3	Viswanathan Anand	IGM	IND	2783	½	½	*	0	½	1	½	½	1	½	5	2784
4	Michael Adams	IGM	ENG	2727	½	0	1	*	½	½	0	½	½	1	4½	2747
5	Nikita Vitiugov	IGM	RUS	2712	½	½	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	½	4½	2749
6	Laurent Fressinet	IGM	FRA	2706	½	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	4½	2749
7	Vladimir Kramnik	IGM	RUS	2801	0	½	½	1	1	0	*	½	½	½	4½	2739
8	Maxime Vachier Lagrave	IGM	FRA	2722	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	1	1	4½	2747
9	Liren Ding	IGM	CHN	2707	1	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	3½	2669
10	Peter Svidler	IGM	RUS	2747	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	½	*	3	2620

34.♖xf1 If I had known what he would play next, I would have thought about 34.♔xf1 to prevent it: 34...axb4 35.axb4 ♘f6 36.♗g5 ♖xd6 37.cxd6 ♕xb6 38.♗xf6 gxf6 39.♖e3 ♔f8 40.♕h6+ ♔e8 41.♕xf6 ♖xd6 42.♖g3 ♖d8 43.♖g8+ ♔d7 44.♕xf7+ ♔c8 45.♕xe6+ ♔b7 46.♖g7+ ♔b8 47.g3 ♕xd4 48.♕e7 ♕b6 49.♖xh7, and after a series of precise moves, White is winning.



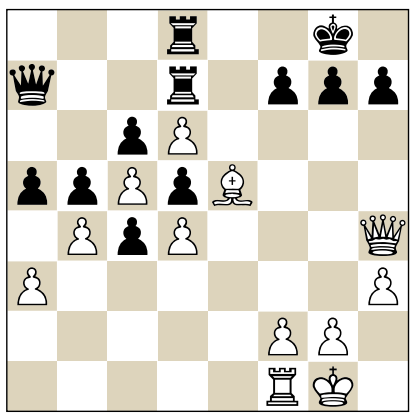
34...♘f6 Another possibility was 34...axb4 35.axb4 ♖b8 (but not 35...♘f6 36.♗g5 ♖xd6 37.cxd6 ♕xb6 38.♗xf6 gxf6 39.♖a1, threatening ♖a3, and the open a-file favours White) 36.♘xd7 ♕xd7, although after 37.d5 exd5 38.♗e5 White is far better.



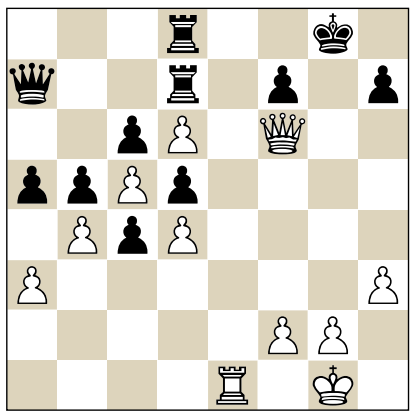
35.♗e5 After 35.♘xd7 ♖xd7 36.♗h6 ♘d5 37.♕g3 f6 38.bxa5 ♕xa5 39.♕g4 White is only slightly better. 35.♗h6 ♖xd6 36.♗xg7 ♔xg7 37.♕g5+ ♔f8 38.♕xf6 ♖xd4 is equal. **35...♘d5 36.♘xd5 exd5** 36...cxd5 37.c6 ♖xd6 38.♕g3 loses the rook. Now comes the critical moment of the game. With about 10 minutes left, I couldn't find any decisive tactics. So I decided to play the safest line, annoyed by the winning chance I might have missed.

BORIS DOLMATOVKSY

Commentator(!) Judit Polgar together with her mother Klara and Vishy Anand's wife Aruna.

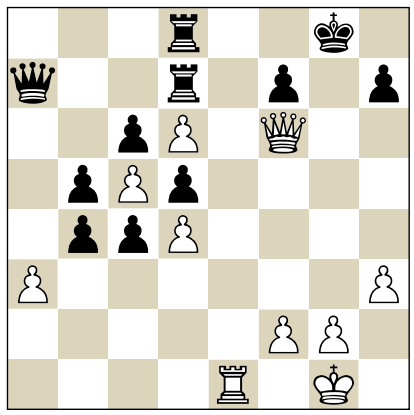


37.♗xg7 ♔xg7 38.♕g5+ ♔f8 And suddenly I realized that I might be winning here. Restraining my excitement, I first repeated moves to pass the time-control. **39.♕f6 ♔g8 40.♕g5+ ♔f8 41.♕f6 ♔g8 42.♖e1**

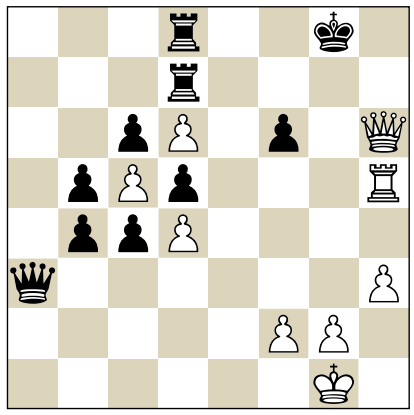


And that's the winning move! Sometimes there is a miracle. Unfortunately for my opponent, Black's position is already hopeless.

42...axb4 If 42...h6 43.♖e3 ♔h7 then 44.♖e7 is decisive: 44...♖xe7 45.dxe7 ♖g8 46.♕xf7+ ♔h8 47.e8♕ ♖xe8 48.♕xa7 c3 49.♕f7 ♖e1+ 50.♔h2 c2 51.♕f8+ ♔h7 52.♕f5+, and White is just in time.



43.♖e5 Not, of course, 43.♖e3 ♕xa3. **43...h6 44.♖h5** If 44.♕xh6, 44...f6 and Black holds. **44...♕xa3 45.♕xh6 f6** 45...♕a1+ 46.♔h2 ♕xd4 47.♖g5+ mates.



46.♕xf6 Black resigned. ■

Carlos Torre
The Mystery Man

Carlos Torre's attacking style – he won a number of games with thrilling queen sacrifices – soon attracted the attention of European chess circles.

Adam Feinstein

What happened to Carlos Torre Repetto, Mexico's greatest ever chess player, whose talent glowed like a meteor for one miraculous year? Torre drew against both Alekhine and Capablanca, defeated Emanuel Lasker, and found himself in the illustrious group of the world's top ten players, but then he suddenly withdrew forever from competitive chess at the age of just 21.

Was Torre the eccentric depicted by Reuben Fine (the American grandmaster and psychologist): a man capable of eating 12 large pineapple ice creams in a single session and plagued by severe insomnia which prevented him from sleeping more than two hours a night? Did he have a nervous breakdown? Could there be any truth in the wild hypothesis that he was poisoned?

Hermann Helms, the American journalist who had taken Torre under his wing for a few short years, told the

Torre

COLLECTION DAVID DELUCIA

Carlos Torre

Mexican International Master, Raúl Ocampo Vargas: 'The story of Carlos Torre could have been a brilliant page in United States chess. Instead, it turned into a shameful paragraph.'

Carlos Torre was born on November 29, 1904, in the city of Mérida, in Mexico's south-eastern state of Yucatán. He was the second youngest of a large family, four boys and three girls. His father, Egidio Torre Solís, was a land-owner and his mother was María Repetto Torre. Egidio was politically active, an ally of Mexico's Vice-President and former governor of Yucatán, José María Pino Suárez. As in the case of the great Cuban, José Raúl Capablanca, young Carlos learnt to play chess by watching his father play, in this instance against Carlos' brothers, Raúl and Egidio. After Vice-President Pino Suárez was assassinated in 1913, the family were forced to flee into exile – to New Orleans in Louisiana, USA. Curiously, this was the birthplace of another great player, Paul Morphy, whose brief career bears several similarities to Torre's.

Torre quickly learnt English and began visiting chess clubs in his new home. He himself recalled later that his early reading included *The Art of Chess* and *The Principles of Chess,* two books by James Mason – although it has also been reported that his favourite book was Benjamin Franklin's autobiography. At the age of 13, his chess gifts came to the attention of an entrepreneur, Edwin Ziegler Adams, vice-president of the New Orleans Chess, Checkers and Whist Club at 120, Bourbon Street. Adams himself recalled later: 'He [Torre] was a small, dark-skinned, thin little fellow, very polite, quiet and serious for a boy of his age. He had learned to play chess from his father and brothers and soon was able to make short work of them over the chessboard.'

Within a year, thanks to Adams' patronage, Torre was already the second strongest player in New Orleans (after a judge called Leon Labatt). Adams' club was thrilled to have a prodigy on its hands. On March 20, 1920, it organised a simultaneous display where, in front of 200 excited spectators, the 15-year-old Torre took less than three hours to defeat eight out of ten players (he drew the other two games). He was pictured at the chessboard in a full-page feature in the magazine *The Good Companion* in 1920 under a headline tellingly describing him as 'A new Paul Murphy'. The article noted Torre's success in a simultaneous display (he won eight out of ten games) and solving a number of tricky chess problems in under an hour.

The earliest known recorded game by Torre is one which the 15-year-old lost against Adams, in 1920. However, major doubts have been cast over whether this game actually took place or whether it was merely analysis of a blitz encounter. Two of Torre's Mexican friends, Alejandro Báez and Pedro Busto Undiano, have insisted that the game was, indeed, never played, and that the whole idea had occurred to Torre after analysing a skittles game. Alternatively, Torre may have invented the beautiful conclusion to the game – exploiting a weak back rank – to please his benefactor.

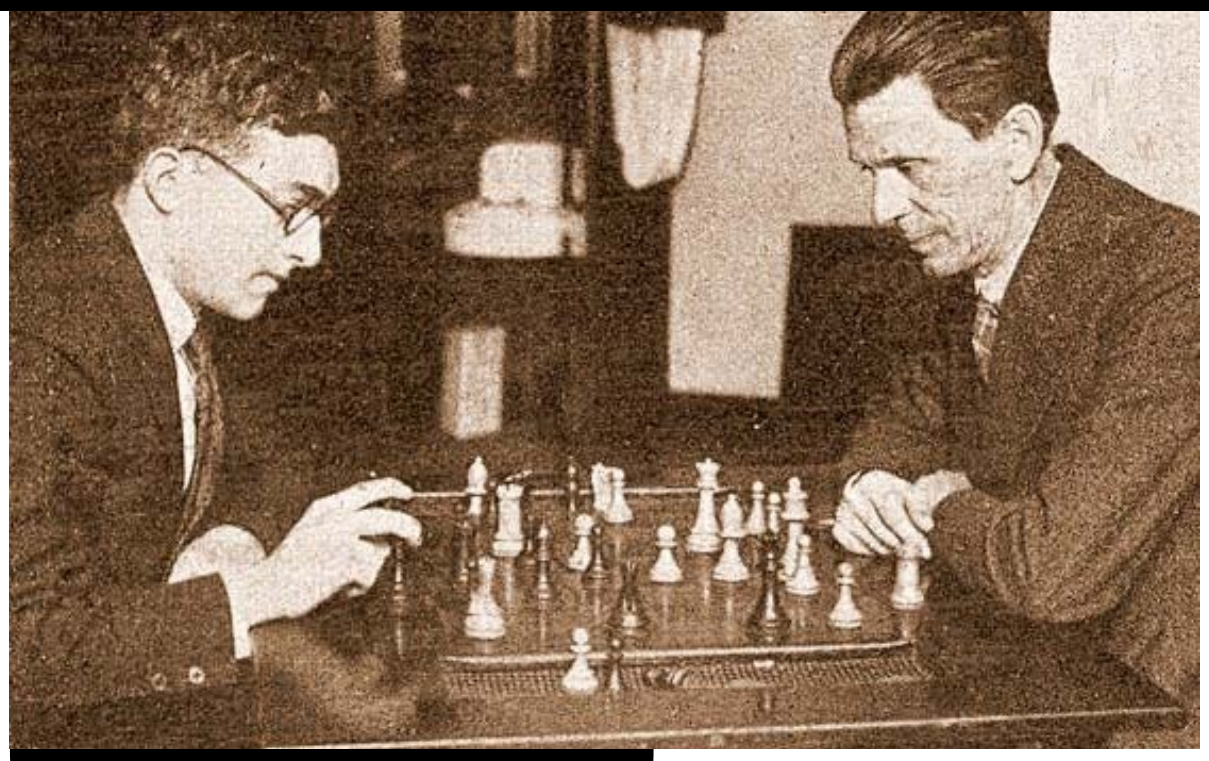
Fourteen-year-old Carlos Torre and his benefactor, New Orleans entrepreneur Edwin Ziegler Adams.

Meanwhile, Carlos was continuing his primary school studies. When these were over, he entered the Spencer Commercial School in New Orleans where he graduated as an accountant, still just 15 years of age. He later found work as a cashier at the Pokorny shoe shop in Saint Charles Street.

In 1922, the German-American master, Edward Lasker, who was visiting New Orleans, agreed to play an exhibition game against Torre, who was not yet 18 years old. The game, on November 18, lasted three hours and ended in a draw after 43 moves. This was a remarkable result, given that Lasker was at the height of his powers at the time and, within a few months, would be contesting the U.S. championship with Frank Marshall.

Recognising that the young boy needed stronger opposition, Edwin Adams offered to pay Carlos' trip to New York, in June 1924, with a letter of introduction to Hermann Helms, the remarkable journalist who had founded the *American Chess Bulletin* in 1904. Helms offered Torre much-needed work at the *Bulletin* commenting on games. (It is said that, years later, in 1948, Helms planned to publish a book containing 300 of the games which Torre had annotated in the *Bulletin*, but this publication never appeared because of a dispute over funding.) Helms also introduced Torre to the main chess clubs in Manhattan and dedicated many of his columns in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* and the *New York World* to his brilliant young protégé.

Torre joined the Marshall Chess Club and won five of the first lightning tournaments he entered. However, there was a 'bigger fish in town' – the celebrated Manhattan Chess Club which could boast players of the calibre of the then world champion, Capablanca, as well as Frank J. Marshall himself. Ambitious enough to want to pit himself against this stronger club, Torre entered the Manhattan Chess Club's champion-



Carlos Torre analysing with Geza Maroczy at the last tournament he played in his professional career, the 1926 Chicago Masters. Torre was just 21 years old.

ship in July 1924 and took third prize (Capablanca and Marshall were not playing). The following month, Torre took part in the New York State Chess Championships at the Rochester Chess Club. He tied for first place with H. Jennings and Torre won the play-off by 3 to 1 in September.

Then Torre went on to represent New York State in the Western Championship – really a U.S. Championship – in Detroit in 1924, along with a future great of the game, Samuel Reshevsky. At the age of just 19, Torre won the tournament resoundingly, two-and-a-half points ahead of his nearest rival. Reshevsky could finish only fifth. Torre's victory confirmed him as America's third-strongest player, after Capablanca and Marshall. Torre actually met Capa at the Manhattan Chess Club on September 24, 1924. The two men shook hands and exchanged a few words in Spanish. The following day, Torre played 20 people in a simultaneous display, winning 18 games and drawing the remaining two. Another simultaneous in Baltimore on November 22 saw him lose just one out of 24 games. A week later, in Kent, Connecticut, he played around fifty players, conceding just five draws. As 1924 drew to a close, an exhibition game was organised in New York on December 28 between Torre and the Pole David Janowski (who had contested the world crown against Emanuel Lasker in 1910). Torre, playing black, emerged victorious in a hard-fought contest which lasted 62 moves.

The Mexican's attacking style – he won a number of games with thrilling queen sacrifices – soon attracted the attention of European chess circles. The *American Chess Bulletin* published a letter from Emanuel Lasker himself in its November 1924 edition describing Torre as a 'promising' talent. He found another prominent journalistic admirer in New York, other than Helms, namely, C.S. Howell, who was also an American chess master. Howell wrote an article entitled: 'A new champion', in which he said America should be as proud of Torre as they were of Capablanca. The young man, Howell said, had great imagination and skill. He praised the 'energy' of the Mexican's play which, he said, was refreshing for not attempting to imitate the so-called 'hyper-modern' style and for being admirably free of dogma.

In March 1925, Torre was offered a place – along with Marshall – at the celebrated tournament in Baden-Baden, Germany, the following month (Capablanca having declined the invitation), much to the disgust of Abraham Kupchik, who had already begun a match with Torre to decide who was to be sent across the Atlantic from the U.S. So it was that Torre sailed for Europe for the first time, together with Marshall, aboard the *SS Antonia*. On the long sea journey, the two men struck up a close friendship and played a number of blitz games with one another.

At Baden-Baden, where he was the youngest participant, Torre finished a creditable tenth in the very strong event, which was won by Alexander Alekhine. Torre was placed just behind Aaron Nimzowitsch and ahead of Richard Réti. The local German press drew attention to Torre's promise, but highlighted his over-anxious and cautious play, often manifesting itself in his tendency to offer draws in positions where he held an advantage.

A week after Baden-Baden, Torre entered the Marienbad tournament in Czechoslovakia, finishing in joint third place (with Marshall) behind Nimzowitsch and Akiba Rubinstein. Nimzowitsch announced the arrival of a new 'chess genius' and, according to Torre himself, greeted him in a Marienbad street by screaming in German: 'Torre is a great master!' and 'Long live Mexico!' Réti also praised Torre for his 'maturity' and 'self-control' and for refusing to succumb to the distractions of fame and fortune.

For reasons that remain unclear, Torre played little competitive chess for the following six months, until he made his way to the Moscow tournament in November 1925, one of the strongest such events ever held. Torre began stunningly well, and was leading after the first nine games. The Mexican mathematician and chess writer, Gabriel Velasco Sotomayor, quotes Capablanca as declaring: 'It wouldn't surprise me if this young man were soon starting to beat us all.' And after Torre's brilliant defeat of Sämisch, he went on to beat the former world champion, Emanuel Lasker, in the famous, but flawed, 'windmill' sacrifice game. Torre himself later declared that neither he nor Lasker had played well in this celebrated game. And Lasker's biographer, Jacques Hannak, claimed that Lasker lost his game to Torre in

Moscow, in part, because the German ex-world champion had been distracted by good news: namely, a telegram informing him that a play he had written with his brother, Berthold, *Vom Menschen die Geschichte* (The History of Mankind), had been accepted for performance at the Lessing Theatre in Berlin.

Nevertheless, the young Mexican's brilliant queen sacrifice (he was still not 21 years old) made headlines around the chess world. The Russian master, Abraham Model, who was the leading trainer in Leningrad at the time and a pillar of the nascent Soviet chess school which would go on to produce no fewer than eight world champions, gushed that Torre had produced 'a new way of playing chess … With Capablanca and the Peruvian [Esteban] Canal, the Mexican Torre has shown that it is from the new continent that the light is shining to show us the way towards reviving world chess, dominated for so many decades by the central empires of Europe. Today, with the USSR school and the creative energy of Spanish America, it is finding a new course. Torre comes from a country which, like ours, has shattered centuries of chains and is revolutionising the world of the twentieth century… With his victory [over Lasker], Torre enters history, with the light of his ancestors and the evergreen youth of libertarian ideas. From very different lands, with very different climates and customs, we feel he is one of ours now after hearing his words which speak of fraternity among men and international co-existence of the workers from all over the world.'

We will return to Model's interesting comparison between the 'revolutionary' Mexico of the early twentieth century and the emerging Communist Soviet nation a little later, because it may have some bearing on Torre's life. Suffice it to say that an interview with Torre appeared in the Soviet Union in 1925, in English and on behalf of a U.S. Communist workers' organisation, in which the Mexican made some unflattering remarks about the situation in the U.S. at that time. Could this, as Raúl Ocampo Vargas has suggested, have made Torre a target for political enemies in America? (Torre always rejected invitations to become a U.S. citizen, it should be pointed out, because he wanted his victories to be 'for Mexico'.)

For now, let us recall that Torre's defeat of Lasker in Moscow prompted voices to grow predicting that the Mexican would be a future world champion. There was also an astonishingly beautiful combination to beat the Russian, Boris Verlinsky. However, a loss to Bogoljubow, the eventual winner of the Moscow tournament, initiated the Mexican's decline and Torre went on to finish joint fifth.

Cubist Chess Set

Unique collector chess set inspired by the legend of Czech cubist architecture and furniture Pavel Janak. Hand made, carved from maple wood, limited edition of 15 sets.

author: Jaroslav Juřica
size: **510 x 510 x 85 mm**
height of king: **105 mm**
price: **1.990 EUR**
exclusive seller: **Šach Mat s.r.o.**
more informations and photos:
www.praguechess.cz/en
contact: **pavel.matocha@gmail.com**
tel: **+420 603 861 533**

The Russian press reported in 1925 that Torre was a witty man who often came out with amusing comments. And indeed, in the silent film *Chess Fever*, which the Russian director Vsevolod Pudovkin shot in Moscow that year and which starred Capablanca, Torre appears with a mischievous smile on his face.

Torre spent the New Year of 1926 in Moscow before moving on to Leningrad to play against that city's three strongest players. He was clearly very tired after his exertions in Moscow and, after beating Abraham Model – the future mentor of Mikhail Botvinnik – he could only draw his two games against Yakov Rokhlin and lost twice against Solomon Gotthilf.

During his two-month stay in Leningrad, Professor Konstantin Derzhavin of Leningrad University invited Torre to write a short essay on the educational value of chess. This quickly appeared in Russian, under the title *Kak formiruetsia shakhmatist*, in Leningrad, in March 1926, to be subsequently published in English as *Development of Chess Ability* in New York later that same year. Then it went on to form the basis of a small book Torre published in Spanish, as *Desarrollo de la Habilidad en el Ajedrez*.

As Raúl Ocampo Vargas has pointed out, Torre's book suffered in translation. Only two of the original pages actually written by Torre exist today from the original he had handed over to his Soviet translators and proof-readers. Even these two sheets, as Ocampo has observed, are drowning in notes by his Soviet collaborator, Rokhlin, at the foot of each page. Ocampo has pointed out the dramatic difference in style between Torre's articles for Hermann Helms' *American Chess Bulletin* and the book he wrote in Moscow.

The book was published in Mexico – in Spanish, translated from the 1926 English version – in several editions: 1927, 1933 and 1998. But Ocampo managed to obtain a copy of the original Russian edition, which, he claims, differs considerably from the 1926 English book. Ocampo claims that Rokhlin wanted to remove certain passages from Torre's book which did not chime with Soviet revolutionary theory.

'Could this have made Torre a target for political enemies in America?'

Ocampo has an intriguing interpretation of the USSR's handling of Torre during his stay. 'At this time, the Soviet Union was consolidating its diplomatic relations with Mexico. It appointed Alexandra Kollontai as its first Ambassador to revolutionary Mexico. But I don't think Torre's participation in the Moscow tournament benefited much from this fact, because Torre was – from the Soviet trainers' point of view – a United States player. The Soviet journalists, however, emphasised that Torre was the son and brother of political revolutionaries who had been against the Díaz dictatorship [in Mexico] …and that Torre's father, Egidio, a masonic leader in Yucatán, had criticised the Hermes masonic lodge in Paris in which many exiles from Imperial Russia were militants … The fact is that Torre was politically useful for the Soviet organisers, who tried to keep him in the USSR as long as possible.'

Torre was, indeed, invited to take part in a series of events throughout the Soviet Union. Trips to the Georgian and Armenian capitals, Tbilisi and Yerevan, were announced in the local newspapers, but these visits never materialised. However, Torre did travel to the three Baltic capitals – Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn.

Interestingly, Ocampo also insists that the Soviet authorities were initially disillusioned to learn that Torre had spent only the first eight years of his life in Mexico before moving to the United States and that he had kept his distance from the Mexican Revolution. But they realised, from talking to Torre, that his family had fled into political exile because they had come into conflict with counter-revolutionaries. 'The idea, therefore, was to work ideologically with Torre and turn him into a solid supporter of the Socialist ideas espoused by the Soviet Union,' writes Vargas. 'The notes of [the Soviet master Alexander] Ilyin-Genevsky practically represent a planned mission to turn Torre into a convinced Socialist. They succeeded, but in so doing, they were doing terrible harm to a young man who enjoyed the special patronage of several North American magnates.'

Torre returned to Mexico for the first time in a decade, arriving at Veracruz on April 19, 1926, on board the Honduran steamer, the *Granada*. Two days later, he left for Mexico City where a committee had been established to fund his three-month stay there. He won all six games in a mini-tournament against three of the capital's strongest players, before making his way to Zacatecas on July 20, where he was warmly received by chess aficionados. He then accepted an invitation from the Yucatán Chess Circle to return to his home town of Mérida at the end of July, giving a simultaneous display there.

He headed back to the United States on board the Norwegian steamer, the

Gunni, on August 11. After a few days in New Orleans, he took the train to Chicago to take part in the Chicago Masters, a tournament featuring most of the strongest U.S. players, as well as Hungary's Géza Maroczy and Edward Lasker, who beat him in the last round to prevent him from winning the event. Torre finished second behind Marshall. The game against Lasker, on September 2, 1926, was the last game of his professional chess career. He was just 21 years old.

What happened in Chicago? The answer to this question may explain why Torre withdrew from competitive chess. A number of sources claim that the congress organisers reduced the second place prize money due to him. Torre supposedly issued a written protest, but, according to the same sources, his pleas were not only ignored but – according to at least one report – he was beaten up by unknown assailants in a Chicago street and, when he tried to defend himself, was arrested by the local police and jailed. While in detention, according to these same sources, he was drugged with an intravenous injection. After this, he was declared 'persona non grata', his visa was withdrawn and he was expelled from the United States. The drug was alleged to have had long-term negative consequences for his health.

Raúl Ocampo believes this version of events – and goes even further. He claims that there is no doubt Torre felt he had been the target of an illegal attempt by some players to prevent him winning the Chicago tournament. Ocampo's geopolitical argument is intriguing (although by no means everyone will accept it) and goes as follows: '[They wanted to] harass a player who had been the pride of the United States chess world [but] who had travelled to the recently created Soviet Union and had made a prolonged stay there, going on to revolutionary Mexico in the 1920s. In both countries, there was a clearly anti-American atmosphere which could not help influencing a 21-year-old man who was no longer "our young man" for North American chess and who was now daring to try to win the top tournament in the United States. That could not be allowed and there were many ways of "destabilising" a young man. I can imagine how furious Torre must have been when he received far less prize money than he deserved. He insulted the person handing him the prize, which he threw on the ground in a natural gesture of contempt towards those who had laid a trap for him. The powerful organisers responded to the insult from this foreign youth with a show of force which they were then forced to justify by passing him off as mad.'

Ocampo's scenario is a speculative one – and unproven. He maintains

that, when he asked Edward Lasker whether he could corroborate this version, Lasker became very angry and walked away.

It was on Torre's return to New York from the Chicago tournament that he was said to have suffered his nervous breakdown. If we do not accept Ocampo's version – or that the deterioration in his health was the consequence of a tranquilliser the Americans had given him – then the other two principal hypotheses for what happened are these: that his application for a post as a teacher was rejected because he was under-qualified for his post, or that his fiancée chose another man over him. Velasco also emphasises Torre's extremely poor diet at this time.

Dr Carlos Fruvas Gárnica, who treated Torre and seemed to be very close to him, reports that Torre, in fact, became a victim of his own success: 'In 1926 there was no Mexican politician, general, rich retailer or monopolistic millionaire who did not want Torre at his social gatherings.' Dr Fruvas believes that the constant demands on Torre caused him a great deal of stress: 'People want to think that Torre lost his mind due to some dark cause. I prefer to believe that Carlos Torre retired voluntarily from chess so as not to have to report to a society made up of crazy people.'

There is a fascinating glimpse of another version of events from a Mexican friend of Torre, F.C.Lona, interviewed by Hermann Helms. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of May 26, 1927, quoted Lona as saying that Torre 'was aware that his health was failing him when he noticed that he had to overexert himself in capturing the Mexican championship and later, when in Chicago, he had to lash himself to the utmost to bring forth his best in the Masters' tournament in which he came second. Then, instead of taking a much-needed rest as soon as he arrived in New York, he devoted himself to translating Dr Lasker's book, *Lehrbuch des Schachspiels* (Manual of Chess)

COLLECTION DANIEL DEMOL

Marienbad 1925. In second row (4th from left) Carlos Torre stands behind Akiba Rubinstein. In front row (2nd from left) sits Aaron ('Long live Mexico!') Nimzowitsch.

which task, Torre asserts, proved to be gigantic and constituted the traditional straw. He is now gaining weight and in general physical health and believes that he will be fit to compete in the next Mexican chess championship during June. If, after that championship, he feels confident that he has become his old self as a chess player, he intends to step out into the world and continue his chess career as an internationalist. Torre's many friends here feel that he will be well advised if he abstains entirely from serious chess for another year and then, fully reinvigorated perhaps, re-enter the arena which gave him world-wide fame.'

In 1929, the Russian writer, Vladimir Nabokov – apparently without having any knowledge of the Mexican's experiences – wrote his novel, *The Defence*, in which the protagonist, a brilliant chess player named Luzhin, suffers a nervous breakdown and is forced to abandon the game. A novel based on Torre's life, *El águila caída* (The Fallen Angel) by Filiberto Terraza, published in 1962, revived the claim that his breakdown was a response to the unhappy ending to a love affair. This has been discounted by many people who knew Torre and who say he was not interested in relationships with women. Yet when Gabriel Velasco asked Torre, in an interview in 1977, whether it was true – as Reuben Fine had alleged – that he had advised his fellow chess players to keep away from women 'because they cost too much money', Torre replied: 'I don't remember saying that but, now that you mention it, no one can deny that they do cost a lot of money! But they're a necessary evil. As that great ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates, put it: "Whether you marry or not, you're going to regret it".'

Curiously, Terraza's dubious tale of romantic heartbreak bears the echoes of another fictionalised biography, Frances Parkinson Keyes' *The Chess Players,* published just a year earlier, in 1961, in which a rejected marriage proposal contributes to the great Paul Morphy's withdrawal from chess.

It might appear wisest to go with Torre's own account. Unfortunately, however, he himself provided two different versions of what happened. In an interview he gave in 1928, uncovered by Hugo Vargas, Torre declared that, following the Chicago tournament, a group of friends had invited him to New York. 'We went to a bar in 115th Street, where we had a few drinks. That was my last lucid moment. I couldn't remember anything after that until I found myself on the boat bound for Yucatán … All that was the cause of my illness: so much work and so many problems of different kinds led to my

head being completely messed up.'

In contrast, in the interview which he gave to Gabriel Velasco at an old-age home in Mérida on August 10, 1977, just a year before his death, Torre declared: 'After the tournament in Chicago, in 1926, my health was shattered due to dietary difficulties. In fact, I suffered a nervous breakdown … Travel and high-level tournament life is pretty intense and alienating. I preferred to return to my own country and work with my brother on something more stable. Afterwards, I abandoned competitive chess but never my love for this beautiful game.'

Torre returned home to Mexico on October 23, 1926. He lived in various different towns – mainly in the northern state of Tamaulipas, with his elder brother, Egidio Torre Repetto, a doctor whose grandson would become the state's governor. Then he moved back to Progreso, in his native Yucatán, where he was employed, for a time, as a chess teacher, as well as living off the generosity of friends like Carlos Durazo, publisher of the Sonora chess magazine, *Ajedrez*, before settling for the rest of his life in Mérida in 1964.

What happened to Carlos Torre in the half-century between his two years near the top of the chess world and his disappearance into obscurity? One little-known fact is that, although he abandoned competitive chess in 1926, Torre continued to write articles, this time for the Mexican chess magazine, *Boletín de Ajedrez*, published for just three years in Zacatecas from 1926 to 1929. Torre contributed to the journal for the entire period of its existence.

Torre did continue to play chess, but only privately. A leading Mexican chess player and author, Professor Febronio E. Chavarría, met Torre in Villagrán,Tamaulipas, in 1933. 'It all happened by chance,' Chavarría recalled. 'My brother and I had stopped off there because we were on our way to hunt deer when our car broke down. My brother went for some tools and while I was waiting in the main square, I noticed a person playing chess on his own. I walked up to him, without realising that he was Maestro Torre Repetto. I introduced myself and asked for a game. "Don't play on your own, much better to give me a game," I said to him. He beat me three times in a row, in less than an hour. Then I told him that my rivals in Monterrey and Mexico City would "sweat blood" to beat me, "but you don't just beat me, you give me a right spanking." I was 25 at the time and he was 29. He replied: "Well, I've played in international tournaments." "What's your name?" I asked him. "I'm Carlos Torre Repetto." I said that, if I'd known who he was, I wouldn't have asked for a game; I would have asked him for lessons! He just smiled. After this meeting, we became friends. Our friendship lasted for around two years. Occasionally, I would bring him with me to simultaneous displays in Monterrey. Then he left for his home town. We wrote to each other a lot but suddenly his letters stopped.'

According to Raúl Ocampo, the Soviet Union was keen to invite Torre back to play there in 1936, but the project faltered due to the Mexican's poor health. In 1963, FIDE, at its 34th Congress, granted Torre the title of International Master – nearly 40 years after he had stopped playing competitive chess. It was only in 1977 – a year before his death – that FIDE finally made Torre a grandmaster.

On November 8, 1974, to mark Torre's seventieth birthday, the first Torneo Internacional Gran Maestro Carlos Torre was inaugurated in Mérida. The hope was that Torre himself would open the tournament but he decided against attending at the last moment.

The Mexican chess master, Emilio

NOT YET A SUBSCRIBER?

You are not yet a subscriber to New In Chess? Give it a try. Take out a subscription today on the premier chess magazine in the world, and receive 8 issues a year, immediately after publication, on your doormat!

	EUROPE	U.K.	U.S.A & CANADA	REST OF THE WORLD
1 year (8 issues)	€ 76.50	£ 64.50	$ 98	€ 94
2 years (16 issues)	€ 145	£ 121	$ 191	€ 165
3 years (24 issues)	€ 215	£ 181	$ 277	€ 239

SUBSCRIBE DIRECTLY AT WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093, 1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands. Phone: 0031-(0)72 512 7137, Fax 0031-(0)72 515 8234, www.newinchess.com, nic@newinchess.com

NEW! NEW!

USA and Canada only: New In Chess c/o Land of Chess, 707 Skokie Blvd, Suite 600, Northbrook, IL 60062, Phone: 847-480-2780, www.newinchess.com, nic@newinchess.com

NEW! **Checks should be made payable to *Land of Chess*** NEW!

Garduño, confirms that Torre continued to play chess during at least some of those fifty mysterious years when he went 'missing' from competitive play. Garduño knew Torre from the 1930s onwards and, decades later, accompanied him on several visits to Mexico City in the 1970s when he witnessed Torre playing lightning chess against a number of international masters and future grandmasters, defeating many of them. Garduño especially recalled the trip Torre made to the Mexican capital in 1975, where he gave several illuminating talks about chess. Wearing thick-rimmed glasses and dishevelled clothes, and according to eyewitnesses, his hands shook so much with nerves as he moved the pieces that he sometimes knocked them over.

There are bizarre accounts of Torre's behaviour in later years. Many of these – such as the rumour that he removed all his clothes on a bus on New York's Fifth Avenue – cannot be verified. A close friend of Torre, Rodolfo Ruz Menéndez, told Juan Villoro: 'Every evening, he came to the house to eat sweet bread and drink a cup of coffee. If he went out to a restaurant, he would say to the owner: "Bring me whatever you like – I can't choose, because I'm a Buddhist".'

In 1975, Torre moved to an old-age home in Mérida, where he died three years later, on March 19, 1978, at the age of 73, after suffering an oedema. His funeral was attended by his brother, Raúl, and his sisters, Concepción and Noemi. Although he had been generally out of the public eye for half a century, he was clearly not forgotten. The local daily, the *Diario de Yucatán*, published a moving tribute which proved that he was not the total recluse he has been made out to be: 'Just six nights ago, on Monday, March 13, Torre Repetto attended the handing out of trophies at the Open Chess Tournament at the University of Yucatán and then, in the company of the winners, he visited this newspaper's offices … In Yucatán, his fame as a chess player has never been forgotten – and will never be forgotten. But he was esteemed, as well, for his gentlemanly behaviour and his kindly heart.'

'But with the great players, against opponents of his calibre, he was a fiend.'

Alfonso Ferriz Carrasquedo, a leading Mexican chess player, knew Torre well. 'He had an extraordinarily kind and friendly personality,' Ferriz recalled in this insightful description of one of the most enigmatic figures in the history of the game. 'As a chess player, he was not interested in wins – or at least, not when I knew him. He preferred the beauty of the game, its essence, the reasons for playing a variation or a combination. He enjoyed the quest for the optimal. He was a perfectionist in the extreme. For example, he studied the etymology of words and squeezed the full richness of their meaning. That's why he spoke so well, with such clarity and precision. The kind of game he liked playing was one where, at the very moment that the slightest imbalance occurred, he could retreat as often as necessary and find the perfect method.

'He was interested in philosophy and the history of ideas. He thought it was absurd that there were so many different religions in the world because, at their heart and since the beginning, they all had the same universal principles. But don't make the mistake of thinking that he was such a kind man at the chessboard. It's true that he did not enjoy beating his friends – maybe he felt sorry for them. He had the same attitude when playing against children or younger players [than himself]. He always offered them draws and if anyone insisted that he fight on, he made sure [that the game ended in a draw]. But with the great players, against opponents of his calibre, he was a fiend. He became implacable and superior and he was capable of defeating anyone. That was why it was disastrous inviting him to tournaments: you simply couldn't plan anything, because he gave points away to the weakest players and offered draws at will. On the other hand, he took decisive points off the strongest players ...

'He was too generous, given his terrible financial situation. Some of his friends bought him clothes or shoes, or we gave him ours. He wore them for a day or two but then he appeared wearing the old clothes he'd been in before. "What happened to the suit?" we would ask him. "Oh, I gave it a man in the street. The poor chap had nothing", he explained.'

Torre lives on in an opening named after him. At his finest, Carlos Torre's play combined Capablanca's superb positional sense with Alekhine's attacking flair. His chess was, in some ways, extremely simple. In his own words: 'The development of our ability consists not in being experts on the openings or being skilled in the endings, because there can be no development without harmony … We must insist on playing all parts of the game equally well. In a word, we must play chess.' ■

St.Louis

The K-factor triumphs in U.S. chess capital

Gata Kamsky and Irina Krush emerged as U.S. Champion and Women's Champion in Saint Louis, which has been nominated 'National Chess Capital' of America. The pair earned their fourth and fifth titles respectively. Krush scorched the field with 8/9 in a single round-robin format, while Kamsky's 6½/9 in a Swiss tournament prompted a three-game playoff to squeak past the surprising Alejandro Ramirez. **Macauley Peterson** watched closely from start to finish.

In the U.S. Congress it's hard to get Democrats and Republicans to agree on anything. The legislative body's approval rating has plummeted to a paltry 9% and it is now less popular than cockroaches, colonoscopies and traffic jams (according to Public Policy Polling). But the Missouri delegation got a boost when a bi-partisan group of Representatives and Senators came together to support the designation of Saint Louis as the 'National Chess Capital', two weeks before the start of the U.S. Championship.

The proposed resolution is, for now, merely symbolic, and has only a slim chance of actually being passed by either the House or Senate, but it nevertheless shows the impact that the Chess Club and Scholastic Center has made during its five-year tenure hosting the nation's most prestigious tournament.

This year, in a great coup for the CCSCSL, the Championship was featured on cable TV in the form of a one-hour special, which aired mul-

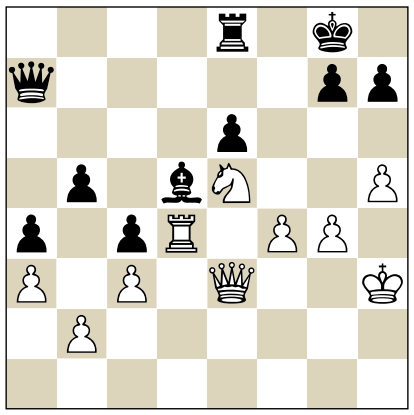
Gata Kamsky and Irina Krush, the 2013 U.S. Champions, on the roof of the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis.

tiple times on Fox Sports Midwest in late May and early June. The network also carried all 50 hours of the live commentary webcast on its own website. It was the fifth time the Chess Club has hosted the event, but the first time the Championship received such widespread media exposure.

No Defense

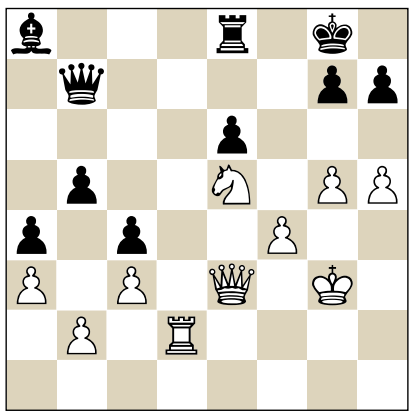
The U.S. Championship returned to a nine-round, 24-player Swiss format – the same as used at the first St. Louis-hosted tournament in 2009. Notably absent from the field was last year's champion Hikaru Nakamura, who could not pass up an elite invitation in Norway. He and Gata Kamsky have alternated Championship wins in recent years, and so in his absence Kamsky was the overwhelming favorite.

In the first half of the Championship Kamsky indeed dominated, winning his first four games, starting with 2007 champion Alexander Shabalov.



Kamsky-Shabalov
position after 36...♖e8

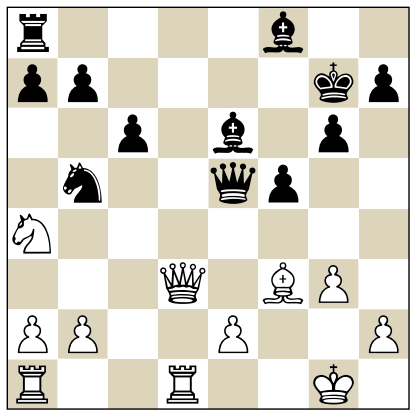
37.♔g3 With an extremely well-posted knight, White is better, but Black was not yet lost until the passive: **37...♗a8** Kamsky seizes the chance to launch an offensive. **38.g5 ♕b7 39.♖d2**



39...♕h1 The endgame is not pleasant either: 39...♕e4 40.♕xe4 ♗xe4 41.♖d6 and 42.♖b6 next. **40.h6 ♗e4 41.♖h2 ♕b1 42.♖e2 ♗b7 43. hxg7 ♖d8 44.♕b6** Black resigned.

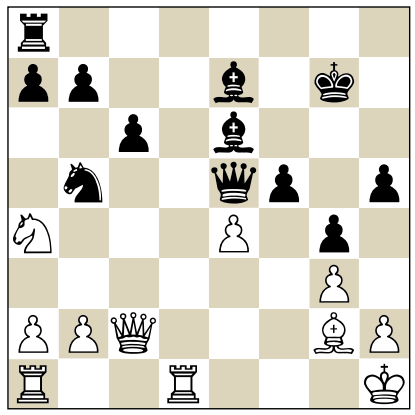
The march of the g-pawn became an on-going theme throughout both the overall and Women's championship, regularly highlighted by color commentator GM Maurice Ashley. Kamsky's g-pawn again proved fateful in Round 2.

Facing the promising IM Kaydon Troff, who celebrated his fifteenth birthday during the tournament, Kamsky employed a Dutch Defense, then sacrificed an exchange to complete his development, before going on the attack.



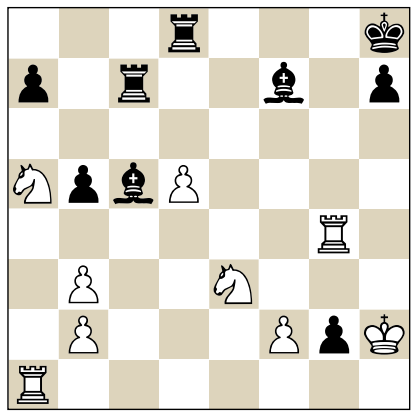
Troff-Kamsky
position after 23...♗e6

24.♔g2 g5! 25.♔h1 ♗e7 26.♕c2 g4 27.♗g2 h5 With 28...h4 looming, Troff tries in vain to strike back in the center. **28.e4**



28...h4! 29.exf5 ♗xf5 30.♕c4 h3 And the bishop is lost. **31.♖e1 hxg2+ 32.♔xg2 ♕f6** White resigned.

Larry Christiansen came closer to derailing Kamsky's tournament in the third round, as he developed a slight edge around the time control, but made an ill-advised exchange sacrifice right at move 40.



Kamsky-Christiansen
position after 39...♔h8

ANNA ZATONSKIH

After he had been groomed for the official photo, Alex Shabalov was ready to roll. Just like Larry Christiansen he finished with a plus score and not a single draw.

40.♘c6 ♖xd5 Black is clearly better after 40...♖f8 41.♘e5 ♗h5. **41.♘xd5 ♖xc6 42.♘e3 ♗xb3 43.♔xg2** And Kamsky's technique was sufficient to win on move 75.

Christiansen's games were a pleasure to watch throughout the event. He (and Shabalov as well) finished the tournament with a plus score and not a single draw. So Kamsky knew he was in for a fight. 'I realized that against Larry, we're gonna play a long game, and what's gonna matter is the amount of energy, and who's gonna be left standing at the end.'

Coming directly from the Grand Prix in Zug, Switzerland, and still recovering from the effects of jet lag, Kamsky was intent on conserving energy. In fact, had it been any other tournament, he might have skipped the event entirely, sandwiched as it was between Zug and the Thessaloniki Grand Prix. But St. Louis has become 'a special place' for Gata, and so he made the trip.

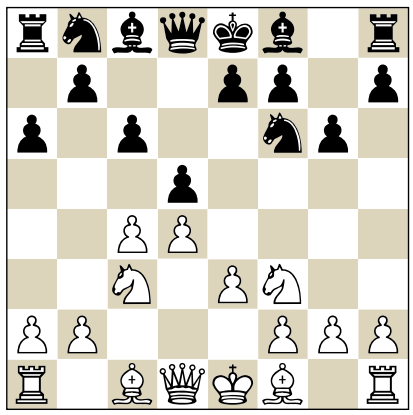
'I felt I couldn't miss this tournament because it's really important to me.'

He describes his wins as being the product of a 'really risky style', one that he tried to temper, starting from Round 4, when he faced the newly minted GM Conrad Holt.

NOTES BY
Jan Timman

SL 3.1 – D15
Conrad Holt
Gata Kamsky
St.Louis 2013 (4)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 5.e3 g6

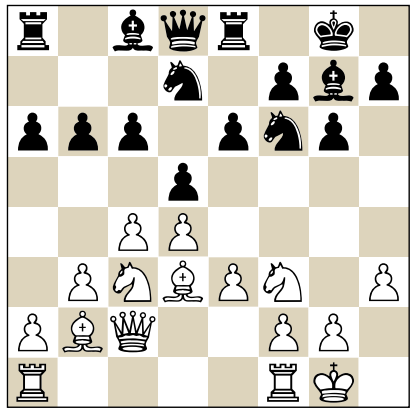


Black goes for the Schlechter Variation after playing ...a6. This is one of Kamsky's tried and tested systems for avoiding direct theoretical discussions.

6.h3

Since Black has also played a more or less wasted pawn move, White can afford to play this preventive move to stop the bishop going to g4.

6...♗g7 7.♗d3 0-0 8.0-0 e6 9.b3 ♖e8 10.♗b2 ♘bd7 11.♕c2 b6

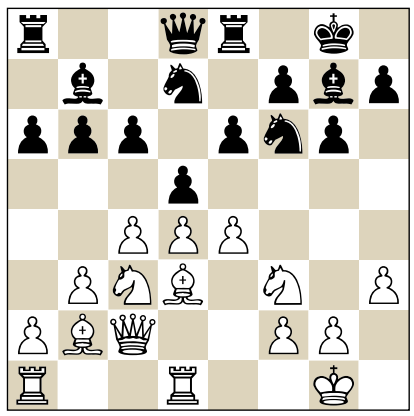


12.♖fd1

Both players have nearly finished mobilizing their forces. The rook move fits in this set-up, but if White wanted to advance his e-pawn, he should have done so at once. After 12.e4 dxe4 13.♘xe4 ♘xe4 14.♗xe4 ♗b7 he has the possibility of 15.♘e5, with a slight advantage.

12...♗b7 13.e4

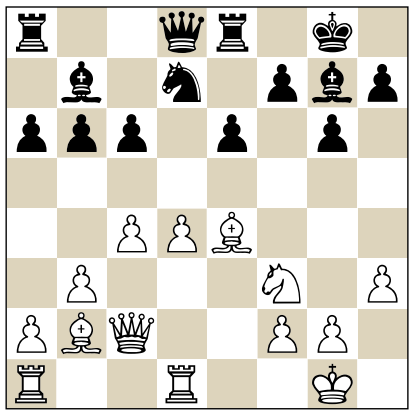
Now that Black has fianchettoed both his bishops, however, this advance is less good. White would have been better advised to reinforce his position with 13.♖ac1.



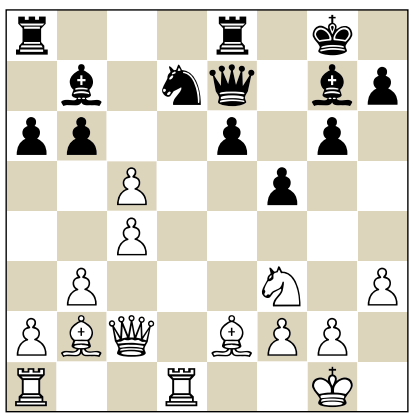
13...dxe4

The immediate 13...c5 would have allowed Black to equalize comfortably as well, but the text is sharper.

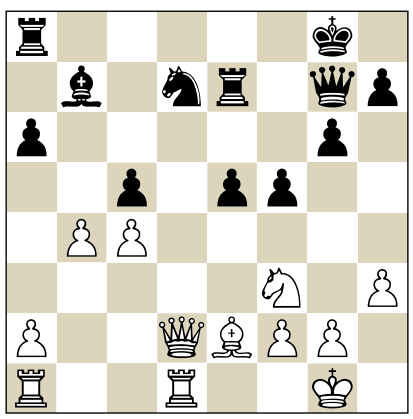
14.♘xe4 ♘xe4 15.♗xe4



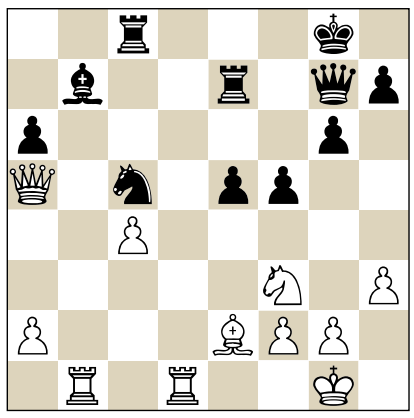
15...f5!
The point of the 13th move. Black extends his influence in the centre.
16.♗d3 c5 17.♗e2
A modest square for the bishop, but Black was threatening to swap on f3.
17...♕e7 18.dxc5



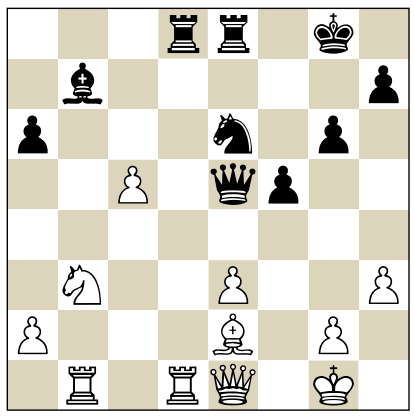
18...bxc5 The alternative 18...♘xc5 would have given Black an easy game. The knight can jump to e4 when desired. Again, the text is Black's sharpest option. He wants to advance his e-pawn to e4 without giving the white knight square d4.
19.♗xg7 ♕xg7 20.♕d2 ♖e7 21.b4
White is looking for counterplay on the queenside. The sortie 21.♕a5 was pointless in view of 21...♖c8.
21...e5



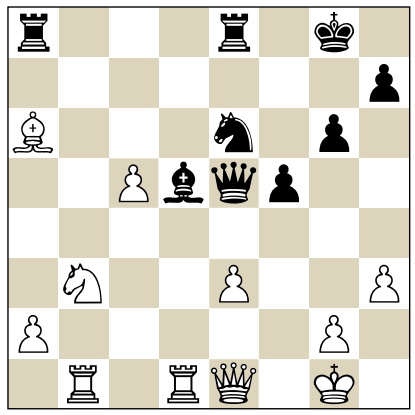
22.bxc5 Inaccurate. White should have maintained the tension. A good move was 22.♘e1, anticipating the advance of the black e-pawn. Now all black pieces come to life.
22...♘xc5 23.♕a5 ♖c8 24.♖ab1



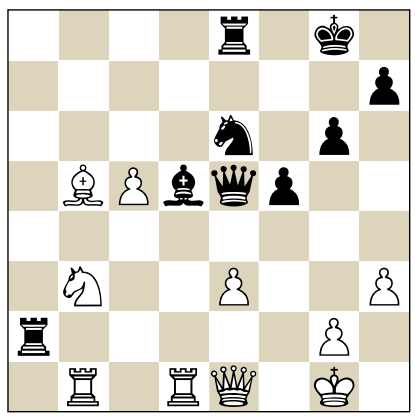
24...♖ee8
Unnecessarily hesitant. There was nothing against 24...e4 25.♘d4 e3!, after which White has nothing better than 26.f3 to keep the e-file and the long diagonal closed. With his mighty e3-pawn, Black is calling the shots. After the text White succeeds in maintaining the balance.
25.♘d2 e4 26.♘b3 ♘e6 27.c5
Opening the diagonal for the white bishop.
27...e3 28.fxe3 ♕e5 29.♕d2 ♖cd8 30.♕e1



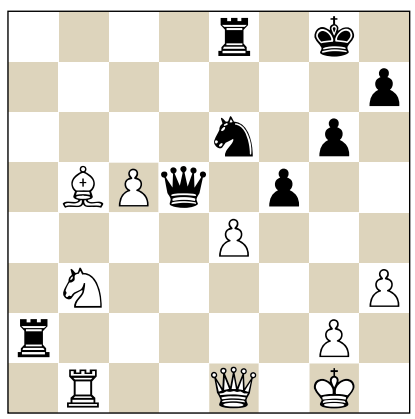
30...♗d5 Black had several ways to recapture the pawn. After both 30...♕xe3+ 31.♕f2 and 30...♖xd1 31.♖xd1 ♘xc5 32.♗c4+ the game would probably have been a draw. In order to heat up the battle in time-trouble Kamsky does something remarkable: he offers another pawn. This attempt is unexpectedly successful.
31.♗xa6 ♖a8



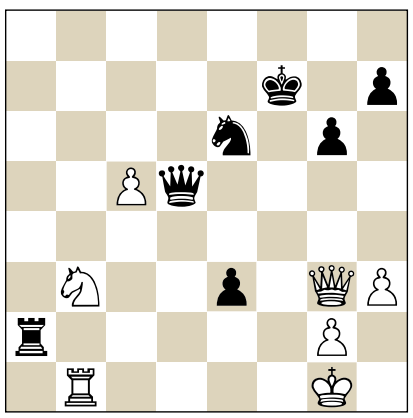
32.♗b5 The start of a combination with a huge hole. White should simply have gone 32.♗f1 in order to cover the g-pawn. After 32...♖xa2 he could get a plus with the manoeuvre 33.♘c1!, followed by 34.♘d3.
32...♖xa2



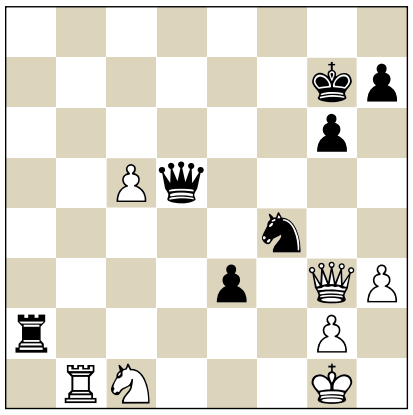
33.♖xd5
Nothing is so difficult in practical chess as to admit a mistake. White should still have gone for 33.♗f1, which would have yielded him a somewhat passive but tenable position. Now things will go wrong.
33...♕xd5 34.e4
The point of the previous moves. White blocks the long diagonal in order to be able to capture the e8-rook. Meanwhile, however, Black gets a decisive attack.



34...fxe4!
Normally speaking, Kamsky prefers to avoid tactical complications and to rely on his strategic qualities, but here he was forced to calculate, as after any other move White's play would be justified.
35.♗xe8 e3
White can no longer cover the g-pawn adequately. Holt had probably overlooked that 36.♕g3 would fail to 36...♘f4.
36.♗f7+
Desperation.
36...♔xf7 37.♕g3



The knight sortie to f4 has been prevented for now, but Black is in no hurry.
37...♔g7 38.♘c1 ♘f4



The death blow. White resigns, because if he takes the rook, he will run into a check on e2.

■ ■ ■

Kamsky realized he was not in the best of form. 'I was missing wins. I was missing moves, tactics, and so I decided to play it safe. And I'm glad it worked out because usually it doesn't. Usually people would catch up with me and they would even go ahead of me with my draws.'

Instead, despite drawing the remainder of his games, Kamsky maintained a half point lead all the way to the final Round 9, when he was finally caught by Alejandro Ramirez, forcing a rapid playoff.

The genial Costa Rican native was an unlikely star of the 2013 championship, coming in as one of the lower ranked grandmasters. But he notched five wins, and the best overall performance rating of 2737.

The rapid playoff games were both drawn in rook and pawn endings. The second game saw a nice stalemating motif that even brought a smile to Kamsky's otherwise stoic face.

That led to what has become a tradition at the U.S. Championship, the so-called Armageddon game, with a twist cooked up by Greg and Jennifer Shahade – from a base time of 45 minutes, the players bid for how much time they're willing to give up in exchange for having black and draw odds. As Gata remarked, 'On [the Russian website] ChessNews.ru they call it the "American System" now, so I guess it's going to stick.' He is a fan of the system, calling it 'something unique ... and the guys who came up with it are geniuses.'

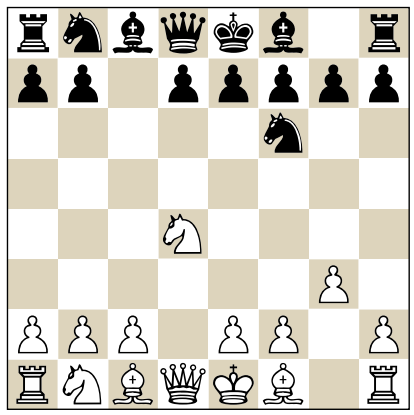
Amazingly, when the bids were unsealed, they were within 15 seconds of each other. Ramirez bid 19 minutes and 45 seconds to Kamsky's 20 minutes! Therefore Ramirez took black with draw odds, while Kamsky had white and 45 minutes on the clock.

Afterward, Kamsky praised his opponent's bidding strategy. 'It was smart – considering the increments it was really smart... I would say the defense in this tournament was really the best of the two – of offense or defense – so choosing Black was a wise decision. But I just got lucky because he blundered. Otherwise we'd be talking about the new United States Champion Alejandro, not me.'

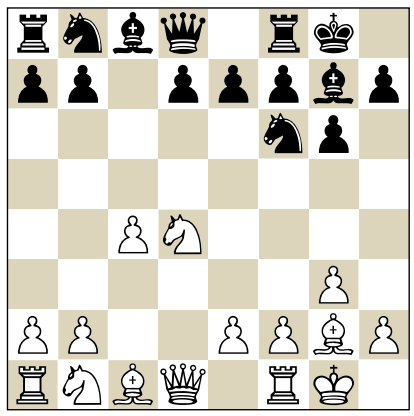
NOTES BY
Jan Timman

EO 49.13 – A46
Gata Kamsky
Alejandro Ramirez
St.Louis 2013 (play-off)

This was an Armageddon Game that White had to win. With only 19 minutes and 45 seconds, against 45 minutes for his opponent, the task of Ramirez to make a draw with black wasn't an easy one against a formidable opponent like Kamsky.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 c5 3.g3 It may sound strange, but this move is at best inaccurate. **3...cxd4 4.♘xd4**

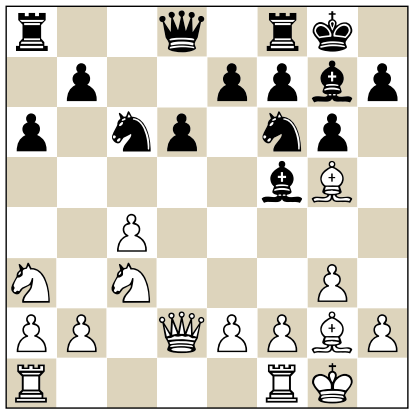


4...g6 Black fails to pounce. After 4...d5 White would have found it hard to equalize. In this type of position, Black usually has already played ...e6. Now he can immediately push his pawn to e5.
5.♗g2 ♗g7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4

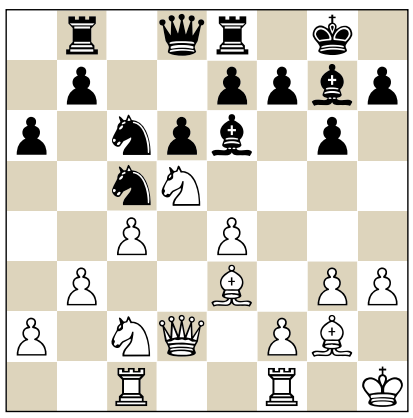


7...♕c7 This move seems less good than the usual 7...♘c6, since White now gets to exert pressure with all pieces on the board.

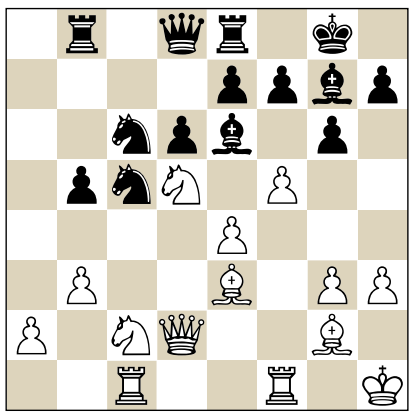
8.♘a3 d6 9.♘db5 ♕d8 10.♗g5 ♘c6 11.♕d2 a6 12.♘c3 ♗f5



13.e4 ♗e6 14.♘d5 ♘d7 15.♖ac1 ♖c8 16.b3 ♖e8 It is hard for Black to find an active plan. White will be able to reinforce his position at leisure.
17.h3 ♘de5 18.♔h1 ♖b8 19.♘c2 ♕d7 20.♘b6 ♕d8 21.♗e3 ♘d7 22.♘d5 ♘c5

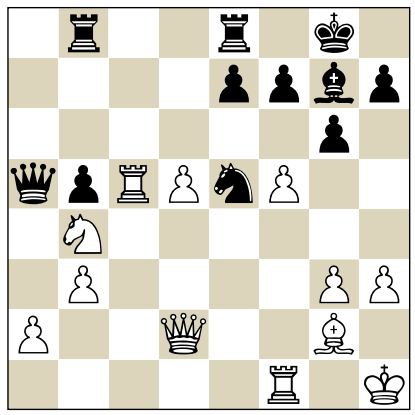


23.f4 Kamsky decides to go on the offensive. **23...b5** The wrong time to get active on the queenside. A better plan was 23...f5 in order to block the further progress of the white f-pawn.
24.cxb5 axb5 25.f5

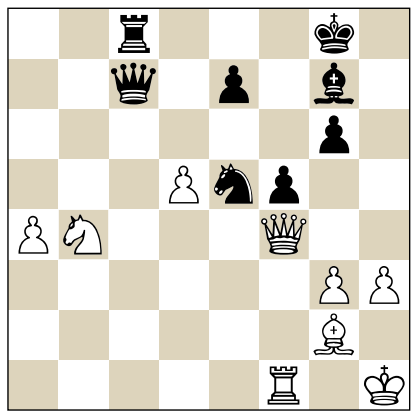


25...♗xd5
The alternative was 25...♗d7, but Ramirez was rightly afraid of 26.♗g5, with the devastating threat of 27.f6. Black is in serious trouble.
26.exd5 ♘e5

27.♘b4 Stronger was the centralizing 27.♘d4, after which the white knight can be deployed more easily. The consequences of Black's 23rd move are clear: square c6 has been permanently weakened.
27...♕a5
A good defence. Pinning the knight offers Black chances to reach an endgame.
28.♗xc5
It is understandable that White wants to win a pawn, but 28.♕e1, followed by 29.♗d2, was probably stronger. 28...♘a6 will then be met strongly by 29.♘c6.
28...dxc5 29.♖xc5



29...♖bc8
With the tactical turn 29...♘d3! Black could have forced a knight swap; with only major pieces and opposite-coloured bishops the position would be hard to win for White.
30.♖xc8 ♖xc8 31.fxg6 hxg6 32.♕f4 ♕c7 33.a4 bxa4 34.bxa4 f5

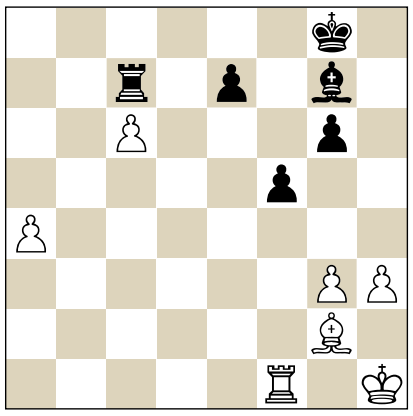


ANNA ZATONSKIH

Coming in as one of the lowest ranked GMs, Alejandro Ramirez was the sensation of the 2013 U.S. Championship. Only in the play-off did he have to bow to Gata Kamsky, who claimed his fourth title.

35.♘c6! More or less forcing a swap, after which White gets a very strong passed pawn.

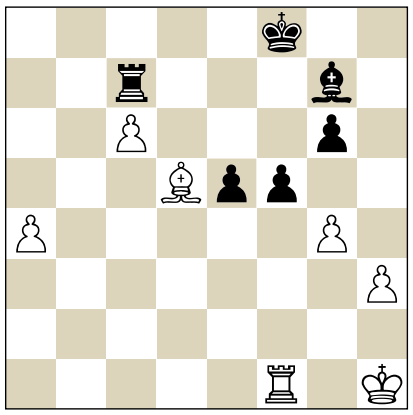
35...♘xc6 36.♕xc7 ♖xc7 37. dxc6



37...e5

Now Black is hopelessly lost. His only chance was 37...♔f7, although White should be winning then as well. **38. ♗d5+ ♔f8 39.g4**

Giving Black the unpleasant choice between allowing his pawns to be blocked or giving up his f-pawn.



39...♔e7 40.gxf5 gxf5 41.♖xf5 ♔d6 42.♗f3 ♖a7 43.♖g5 e4 44. ♗xe4 ♗e5 45.♖g6+ ♔c5 46.♗f3 ♔b6 47.♖g5 ♖a5 48.h4 ♔c7 49. h5 ♔d6 50.h6 ♖xa4 51.♖xe5 ♔xe5 52.c7 Black resigned.

■ ■ ■

At the closing ceremony, after accepting his $30,000 first prize, Kamsky was almost at a loss for words. 'Honestly, I was dreading this moment to give a speech more than I was dreading the playoff against Alejandro,' he joked, eliciting widespread laughter from the crowd.

He seems quite at ease in Saint Louis, surrounded by people who have become friends. Shuttling between tournaments, he said he doesn't see his family in Moscow so often, but noted with pride that the day he won his fourth U.S. Championship was also his son Danik's fourth birthday.

Krush Cashes In

Compared to Kamsky, Irina Krush sailed through to her fifth Women's Championship victory, due in large part to her third-round win over Anna Zatonskih.

'That was the big thing...you put yourself in a leader's position and then you never let go of it, so on the outside it looks pretty good. And I actually never managed to do that before.'

The two top-seeded IMs have traded titles exclusively between themselves since 2006, but Krush had never successfully defended hers, nor beaten her rival in a round-robin format.

'We can expect to win a lot of games against the other players, so how we do against each other just kind of determines a lot.'

'I've had to play several play-offs, and those things always are extra nerve-wracking, so when you manage to avoid one you thank your lucky stars.'

At the closing ceremony, Krush joyfully proclaimed that she intends to put her $18,000 winnings toward a down payment on a Brooklyn apartment. 'My life in Brooklyn is wonderful. I love to be home, so I'm actually rushing to get home. I want to get home as quickly as possible – I have a 6:30 flight tomorrow.'

Irina currently lives in an apartment owned by her parents, for which she pays rent, but they have recently decided to sell the property.

'It's a big project for me. I'm not looking forward to it – I wish I didn't have to in a way. But this check, it really contributes a lot to my life.'

NOTES BY
Irina Krush

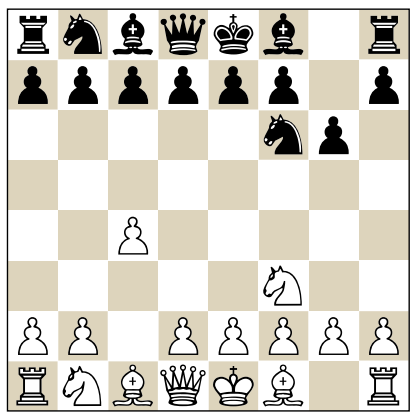
KI 2.5 – E99
Anna Zatonskih
Irina Krush
St.Louis 2013 (3)

This third-round game was played on a very special day, May 5th, Orthodox Easter. When I realized at the drawing of lots that my most critical game of the tournament would fall on this day, I could not help but see something symbolic in that. On the one hand, it wasn't ideal – the first few days of the tournament were particularly hard, as they were the last days of the Holy Week, and I tried to spend as much time in church as I could. If it were up to me, I would've put this game further on in the event, when I'd be able to focus on it 100%. But on the other hand, I knew that there are no accidents in life, so I just trusted that it was all for the best.

1.♘f3

A surprise. Anna usually opens with 1.d4. I spent a couple of minutes trying to figure out what inspired her change, and also wondering if I should use this opportunity to deviate from my preparation as well.

1...♘f6 2.c4 g6

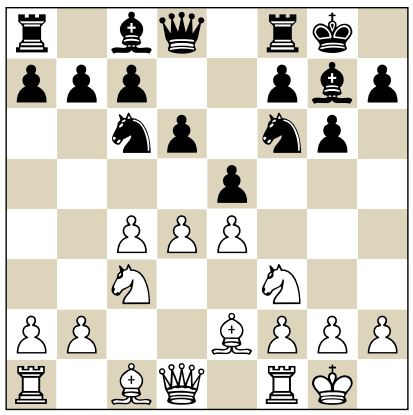


I decided to stick to the plan. There are lots of openings to try to equalize with, but on the day of the Lord's victory you should also play for victory!

3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.d4 0-0 5.e4

No 5.g3 ? – another small surprise from Anna.

5...d6 6.♗e2 e5 7.0-0 ♘c6



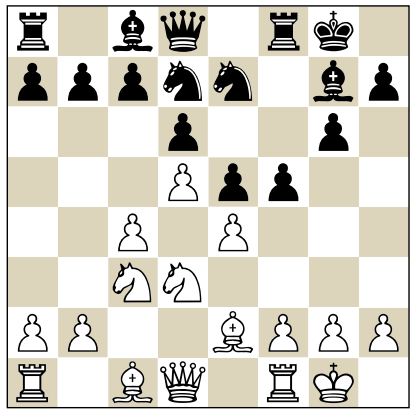
8.d5

From the point of view of my preparation, this was a stunning (and not very pleasant) turn of events. A mainline King's Indian? Anna had never played it before. I thought we were at least heading for 8.♗e3, Fridman-Naiditsch, Baden-Baden 2013. Now I had to face the possibility of making one inaccurate move and losing the entire right-hand part of the board. This made me a little anxious. But my unchanging goal for the tournament was to always hold on to my inner peace, and so even this didn't unsettle me too much.

8...♘e7 9.♘e1 ♘d7 10.♘d3

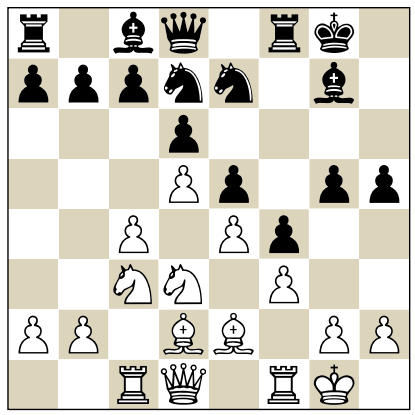
A line that I'd played for many years with white, but Anna does it a little differently.

10...f5



11.f3!? 11.♗d2 is what I used to play, but it allows 11...fxe4, a good equalizing try. **11...f4** Now that the bishop can't come to g4, Black can safely advance with that pawn.

12.♗d2 h5 13.♖c1 g5



14.♗e1

This move was a big relief to me. White is mixing two lines (10.♘d3 and 10.♗e3), both of which I've played with white. The bishop is supposedly heading to f2, but instead of going there in two moves (♗e3-f2), it takes three. I'd be more worried about something direct like 14.c5.

14...♘g6 15.c5!

White gets back on the right track. I thought a little about taking this

DON'T BLUNDER WITH YOUR EDUCATION.
PLAY CHESS HERE.

UT DALLAS

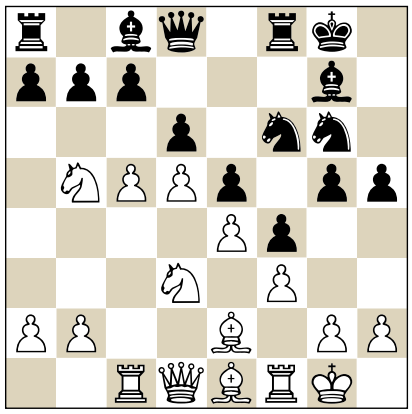
If you're interested in playing chess at an American university, we want to hear from you. The University of Texas at Dallas offers highly competitive scholarships to master-level players. For more information, please contact Program Director Jim Stallings at james.stallings@utdallas.edu one year in advance of your intended fall enrollment date.

utdallas.edu/chess

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

pawn, but not too seriously – any opening of the queenside should be good for White.

15...♘f6 16.♘b5



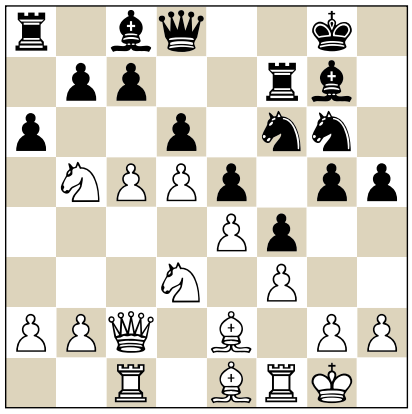
16...♖f7

I considered 16...a6 but was afraid of the typical piece sac 17.cxd6 axb5 18.dxc7 ♕d7 19.♕b3 – the comp shows that type of position to be in White's favor usually.

17.♕c2

17.cxd6 cxd6 18.♕c2 ♘e8 19.♗f2 g4, with typical counterplay – 20.♘xa7 is met with 20...♗d7.

17...a6



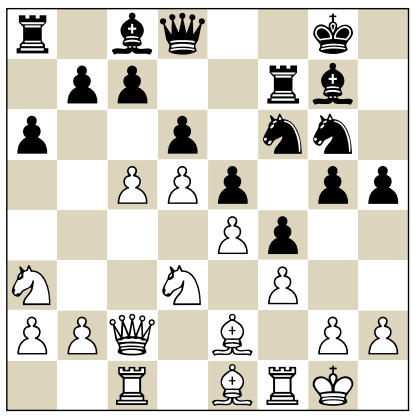
18.♘a3

I got nervous after this move, as ♘c4, cxd6 and ♗a5 with an invasion on b6 is coming. If I lose the light-squared bishop, I'll probably lose the game. And I just couldn't solve this problem in a good way. The continuation I played in the game – taking on f3 to free up the g4-square – seemed pretty artificial, but it's the only thing I found.

Now 18.cxd6 axb5 19.dxc7 is a much better version for Black, because ♖f7 is more useful than ♕c2.

NEW IN CHESS

Irina Krush: 'The first few days of the tournament were particularly hard, as they were the last days of the Holy Week, and I tried to spend as much time in church as I could.'

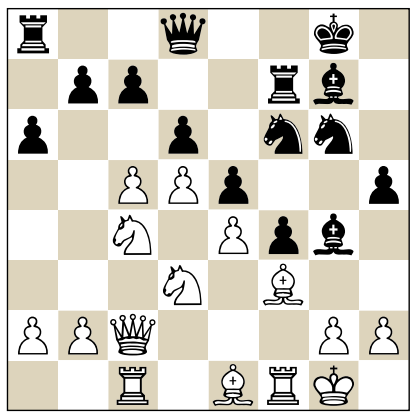


18...g4

18...♗f8! would have been in the spirit of the King's Indian: 19.♘c4 (19.cxd6 ♗xd6! 20.♘c5 ♘f8) 19...g4 20.♗a5 ♕e8! 21.cxd6 ♗xd6 22.♘xd6 cxd6. The key is to recapture on d6 with the bishop, getting rid of this poor piece. I totally underappreciated this idea, thinking only that it'd make the c5-square too weak. Definitely my lack of King's Indian experience became obvious in this decision.

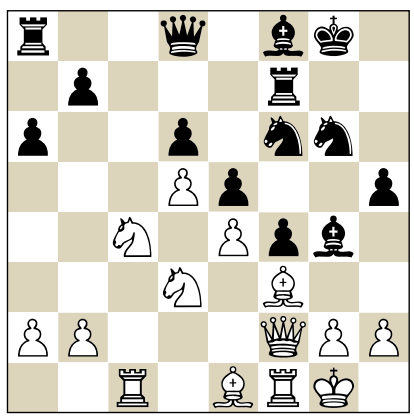
19.♘c4 gxf3 19...♗f8! was not too late, as Anna had not played 19.cxd6.

20.♗xf3 ♗g4 So my position is pretty dubious here. White has different ways to prove that, but my coach liked 21.♕e2!, which would stop my regrouping with ...♘h7. Then White plays ♗f2 and doubles on the c-file.



21.♕f2 This move didn't look punishing enough.

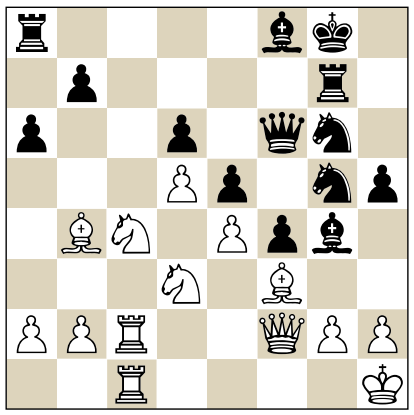
21...♗f8 22.cxd6 cxd6



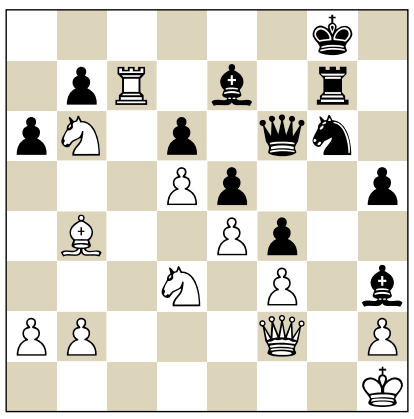
Still reluctant to play ...♗xd6. It's funny how in the end I will be so eager to trade that bishop.

23.♔h1 ♘h7 24.♗b4 This move was a red flag, and I immediately remembered some Kortchnoi games.

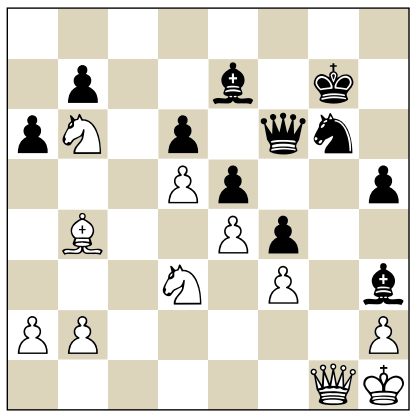
24...♕f6 Running away from ♕b6!
25.♖c2 ♘g5 26.♖fc1 ♖g7



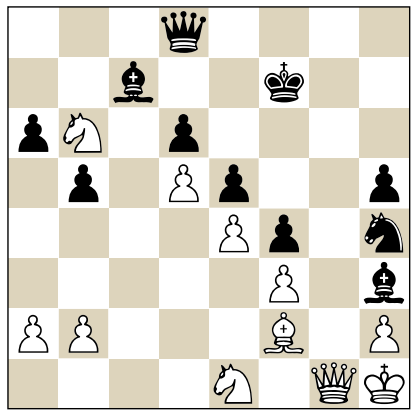
I was pretty pleased with this position. I've got a nice little army on the g-file, and the queenside has not been lost yet. I was not sure how White planned to make progress there.
27.♘b6 ♖e8 28.♖c7 ♖ee7 29.♖xe7 ♗xe7 30.♖c7 ♘xf3 31.gxf3 ♗h3
Doesn't this look overwhelming for Black? ...♘h4 is coming...



32.♘c8!
I totally overlooked this counterattack. I got down to about two minutes here looking for a forced win. I was sure it was there. How could it not be? Finally I had no choice but to give up on a winning line and make a move. But you know what? There is no win. It's just an equal position. During the game I didn't know that though, and psychologically it was difficult because I felt like I had failed to find it.
32...♗f8
32...♘h4 33.♘xe7+ ♔h7 34.♘g8! ♔xg8 35.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 36.♗xd6 and White wins, is an example of what can happen to Black if she's exceedingly ambitious.
33.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 34.♘b6 ♗e7 35.♕g1



Now I felt like the tables had turned. Unexpectedly, White is threatening to win the ♗h3 with ♘f2. A few moves ago I had been looking for a win, now with the seconds ticking down I'm about to lose a piece. I tried hard not to panic and found:
35...♗d8 36.♘c4 ♗c7 37.♗e1 ♔f7 38.♗f2 ♘h4 39.♘e1 b5 40.♘b6
40.♘a3 ♗a5 41.♘ac2 was possible, but it's understandable that with little time Anna didn't want the bishop to be activated on a5.
40...♕d8



So with less than perfect play in time-trouble, we arrived in this position. I was disappointed at having my 'win' escape, and although I preferred my position, I was not at all sure I could win it.
41.b4
41.♘a8 ♗a5 (41...♗b8 42.♗a7) 42.♗b6 would probably have been a better idea.

Play with the world's best correspondence chess players on one of the most advanced chess servers in the world.

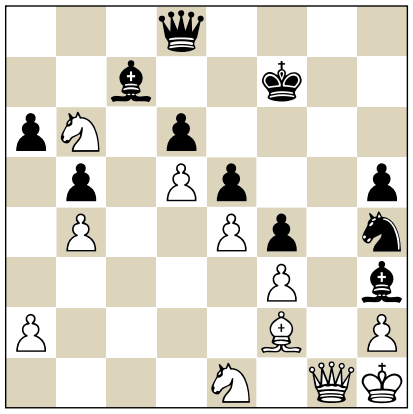
Register at: **www.iccf-webchess.com**

Join a team of thousands playing great chess at ICCF.

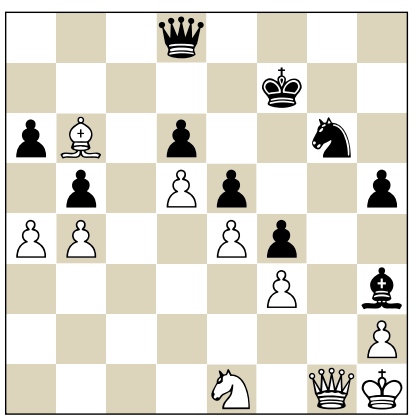
ICCF also offers World Championships, Olympiads, and many other Team and Individual Tournaments where you can participate from any place around the globe.

View live games of the world's best players – also free games downloads.

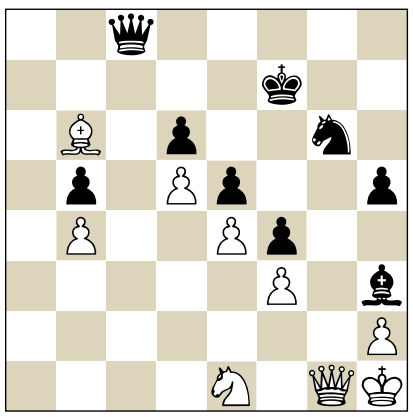
Contact us at: **www.iccf.com**



41...♘g6! Why retreat the active knight? Well, firstly it ties down the queen, and after an exchange on b6, I won't be able to move away from the g5-square. On g6 the knight is very solid and makes my king much safer to the ♕g5 incursion.
42.a4 ♗xb6 Bye bye, dear bishop. You did good for a KID bishop ☺.
43.♗xb6



43...♕c8
I missed the simple and deep finesse 43...♕d7!!, which wins the game. Either White takes on b5, allowing ...♕xb5 and ...♕e2, or if White plays a5, then back to c8, and the b4-pawn won't have protection from ♗a5 anymore.
44.axb5 axb5

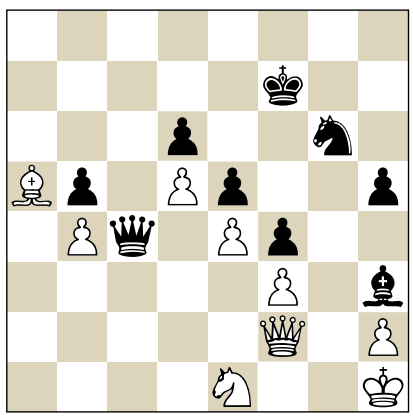


St.Louis 2013 women

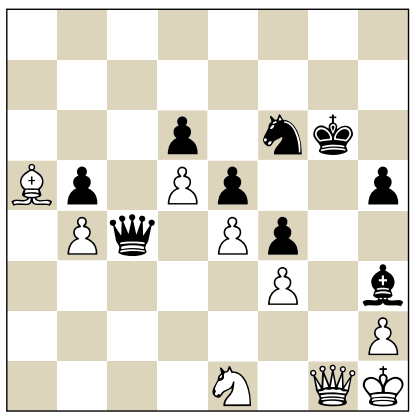
				TPR
1	Irina Krush	2470	8	2610
2	Anna Zatonskih	2466	7½	2533
3	Tatev Abrahamyan	2280	6½	2446
4	Camilla Baginskaite	2278	4½	2281
5	Iryna Zenyuk	2243	4½	2285
6	Sabina-Francesca Foisor	2300	3½	2198
7	Alena Kats	2144	3	2171
8	Anjelina Belakovskaia	2263	3	2157
9	Sarah Chiang	2098	2½	2135
10	Viktorija Ni	2262	2	2062

10 players

45.♕f2 A key point behind 41...♘g6 reveals itself in the following line: 45.♕g5 ♕c3 46.♗f2 ♕c4 and Black infiltrates on f1 without having to worry about the knight hanging.
45...♕c4 46.♗a5



White's position is getting close to a breaking point, but what I have is not enough. I realized the ♘g6 needs to contribute more. I envisioned putting it somewhere on g5, to make sacrifices on e4 possible. **46...♘f8 47.♕a7+** There is not much to move, and we are back down to a couple minutes, so I suppose this is logical. **47...♘d7 48.♕f2 ♘f6 49.♕a7+ ♔g6 50.♕g1+**



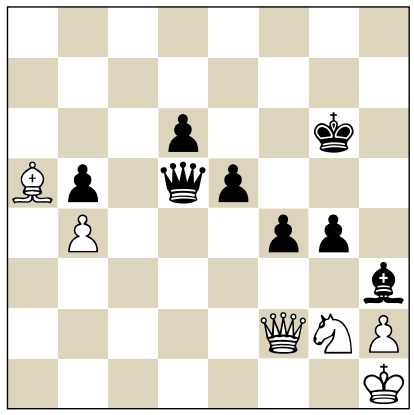
St.Louis 2013 men

				TPR
1	Gata Kamsky	2741	6½	2733
2	Alejandro Ramirez	2551	6½	2737
3	Alexander Onischuk	2666	6	2670
4	Timur Gareev	2674	6	2690
5	Conrad Holt	2513	5½	2679
6	Larry Christiansen	2579	5	2623
7	Alexander Shabalov	2544	5	2626
8	Ray Robson	2620	5	2613
9	Kayden Troff	2421	5	2614
10	Joel Benjamin	2534	5	2644
11	Varuzhan Akobian	2616	5	2554
12	Yaacov Norowitz	2451	4½	2543
13	Samuel Shankland	2612	4½	2521
14	Gregory Kaidanov	2593	4	2457
15	Yuri Shulman	2570	4	2484

playoff Kamsky-Ramirez won by Kamsky

24 players

50...♘g4! Suddenly this move presented itself. The knight had better plans for itself than I did. **51.fxg4** This was cooperative. After I played 50...♘g4, I noticed that 51.♘g2 still offered resistance. As I was trying to work it out, Anna took the knight.
51...♕xe4+ 52.♘g2 hxg4 53.♕f2 ♕xd5



54.♕c2+ ♔g7 55.♗c7 f3 56.♔g1 White is mated after 56.♘e3 f2+ 57.♘xd5 f1♕+. **56...♗xg2 57.♔f2 ♕d4+ 58.♔g3 ♕f4+ 59.♔f2 ♕xh2 60.♕f5 ♗h3+** White resigned.
A tough game, which was only decided in the last few minutes. But it essentially cleared the path for me to win the Championship. ■

Macauley Peterson produced the USChessChamps.com live webcast on behalf of the Chess Club and Scholastic Center.

Hans Ree

Triple A Locations

It hardly matters where you play, for chess will make you forget about your surroundings. Still, thinking about chess venues proved to be a memory generator for Hans Ree.

Would you write something about chess in museums, asked our editor Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam. In 2012 he had been present at the match between Anand and Gelfand at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and this year he had been at the Alekhine Memorial, played in the gardens of the Louvre, the Tuileries, and then, the second leg, in the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. He was obviously enchanted by the mixture of chess and art. I suggested a more general theme, chess in unusual locations, so my article was provisionally filed at the NIC office as 'chess in weird spots'.

There was a time when some people considered the greater part of Asia as a weird spot for chess.

When it became clear that FIDE had assigned the match between Anand and Carlsen to the Indian Chess Federation and that it would be held in Chennai, I was reminded of a story that Viktor Kortchnoi once told me about his first World Championship match against Karpov in 1978.

I can imagine that both Carlsen and Anand were unhappy with the choice of Chennai. Carlsen made it quite clear that he was. As far as I know, Anand refrained from comment and it was suggested that playing on home ground would be advantageous for him. To use a famous expression of a character from the Gershwin musical *Porgy and Bess*, it ain't necessarily so.

Anand has played a Candidates' match against Gata Kamsky in Sanghi Nagar in 1994 and the first part of the FIDE World Championship of 2000 in New Delhi, and in both cases it was reported that he suffered such overwhelming attention from his fans, that he was grabbed on the streets by the masses, almost eaten alive and hardly dared to go outside his hotel.

Against Kamsky, after being two points ahead, he succumbed to the pressure and lost the match, and in New Delhi he was lucky to escape to Tehran to beat Shirov in the finals of that championship. So it seems quite possible that both Carlsen and Anand will play on a location where they'd rather not be, though of course Anand as a national hero of India could never say so.

All too clever

As Kortchnoi told me the story which I mentioned, it had been more or less like that in 1978, but not because of the heavy hand of the administration, but because he and Karpov had been too clever for their own good.

There had been four offers for their match, from Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and the Philippines, with more or less the same financial conditions. Those were civilized times when the players could decide and only when they disagreed would FIDE step in.

Kortchnoi chose Austria, because he thought Karpov was too popular in Germany. He had to submit a second choice and did some shrewd thinking. If his second choice was the Netherlands or Germany, there was a good chance that this might be Karpov's first choice, which would settle it: they would play on Karpov's place of choice. So, cleverly, Kortchnoi gave as his second choice a place where he didn't want to play, but of which he was sure that Karpov wouldn't like it either: the Philippines.

Unfortunately, Karpov had done exactly the same clever thinking and also given the Philippines as his second choice. And so they ended up in Baguio City – as in the famous prisoner's dilemma, in which the prisoners, spending too much thought on the possible reasoning of their criminal partner, end up with much stiffer sentences than if they would have trusted each other.

At least, that's how Kortchnoi told it to me. When I checked it in his book *Chess is my Life*, I found a more humdrum story. There he writes that there was indeed something he really liked about the Philippines: that it was far from the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. The story as I heard it was more amusing and what's more, told only a few years after the fact.

I wonder if Baguio City would be considered an unlikely site for a championship match at the time. After the death of Campomanes I wrote in New In Chess that at the FIDE congress of 1968, when there was a lobby to give

Far Asia two FIDE zones instead of one, the British delegate Harry Golombek had said – but of course I wasn't there and I can't vouch for it, though I think it was just like him to say so – that one might as well speak about chess played by penguins or polar bears.

In 1978, when Karpov and Kortchnoi played their match, Anand was only eight years old and China would take part in an Olympiad for the first time only towards the end of that year. Far Asia was still far removed from the centre of chess life.

Russian prisoners uphold a tradition

Of course there are no really weird spots for chess. Chess has been played everywhere, in space, under water, on Antarctica, in prison. Very much so in prison, for what else is there to do? In 1996 the American Claude Bloodgood rose to second place on the American rating list (Kamsky was first) only because of his hundreds of wins against fellow inmates, and the USCF had to consider the possibility that he would claim a place in the American Olympiad team.

I once played a simul in a prison in Amsterdam and of course I was curious what my opponents had done to be there. The guards were not allowed to supply information, but gave some none-too-subtle hints, naming some countries and saying: need I say more?

Recently, on May 15th, there was a match via Skype between American and Russian prison inmates. The Russians, with a fine sense of history, won by 15½-4½, which was exactly the same score as in the radio match between the Soviet Union and the USA in 1945.

But though chess on unusual locations may not be a likely subject for an article, it is an idea that generates memories. I think of locations, from the chess club where I went as a young schoolboy to the concert hall where I played chess in a performance created by John Cage, and I see my life in chess go by. I realized that I could write a book about chess locations.

A game of chess in a submarine. Why not?

My junior chess club was located in a quiet and beautiful alley and inside the names of great players from the past and old pictures of chess events were displayed. That was where I wanted to be, I realized when I was 13 years old.

Yankee ape with Coca-Cola

Glamorous and large, at least in my memory, was the playing site of the first Olympiad in which I took part, in 1966 in Cuba at the hotel Habana Libre, the former Hilton hotel. Probably not so large by modern standards, as only 52 countries took part, a small number for us, but at the time it was a record.

> 'I saw Fischer just being Fischer, which was enough, as he was already a legend.'

Women's Olympiads were played at a different time and place then, but one woman took part in the general Olympiad, Mrs Berna Carrasco from Chile, who, if you don't count the Dutch official Kapsenberg, who nominally was second reserve but didn't actually play, was the only participant not to score even half a point.

These statistics I learned from the Olimpbase website, which also reports that at the start of the event a Cuban newspaper called the whole island one mighty chessboard, that the budget for the Olympiad had been several million dollars and that more than a thousand technical staff were involved. We were certainly well catered for.

I also learn from Olimpbase that I won third prize as first reserve. Did I get a medal, or at least a certificate? I have no idea and anyway it wasn't such a great performance, as the Dutch team ended up in Group B after the preliminary qualification matches.

I remember an exhibition in Havana about U.S. imperialism with a big picture of an ape drinking from a Coca-Cola bottle. I saw Kortchnoi supporting himself at a column in the tournament hall because he was weak with laugh-

ter after he had saved a lost position against the Bulgarian Tringov. Going over that game now with an engine, I saw that the evaluation during the time scramble fluctuates between mate in four and +16 for White, Tringov. I saw Fischer just being Fischer, which was enough, as he was already a legend.

Fear of a poisonous snake

In our preliminary group, Hungary was clearly the strongest team. The competition for the second spot in Final A was between the Netherlands and Cuba. We were stronger, but Cuba played on home ground.

Some Dutch players were told by members of two other teams that they had been approached by Cuban officials with the request to lose their match against Cuba, or in the case of mighty Hungary, to settle for 2-2. These two teams had refused indignantly, but against some other teams Cuba had done surprisingly well.

In these dealings a role was played by the Czechoslovakian grandmaster Ludek Pachman, who was the trainer of the Cuban team. Later he would maintain that he had been present at the negotiations only as an interpreter and he was indignant that this should be held against him.

I was a novice in the Olympic team and while we were in Havana nobody told me about all this. I only learned about it back in the Netherlands, when Lodewijk Prins talked about it on Dutch radio.

Why had we not protested, I asked Frank Goudsmit, the president of the Dutch Chess Federation, who had been present at the Olympiad. He answered that he had followed the advice of the Dutch embassy in Havana, which had told him to protest by all means once back in Holland, but that if he did so in Havana, he might wake up in his hotel room and find a poisonous snake in his bed. Some staff members of our embassy, though not the ambassador himself, held a very negative view of the Cuban revolution.

The Netherlands finished first in Group B by a huge margin. Cuba finished last in Group A, losing all their matches. It was a small consolation.

At the end of the Olympiad all players received a big box of Cuban cigars and a big and beautiful chess set, presented as a personal gift of Fidel Castro. All in all, for me it had been a splendid Olympiad. The cigars made me a smoker, to great subsequent delight, and the chess set I still use, but only to play over the most beautiful games, too good for the screen. It's a ritual.

A breathtaking view

About the venue of what was then called the Intel World Championship in New York in 1995, between Kasparov and Anand, there was not much to rhapsodize about at the time, though it was played on the Observation Deck on the 107th floor of one of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. One day I went a bit higher, to the outdoor terrace on top of the building, and the view of New York and the river – Hudson river or East river or both? I don't remember – was indeed breathtaking.

Kasparov and Anand were sitting in a glass booth that was supposed to be absolutely sound proof, but wasn't really. I found it a rather embarrassing spectacle, as if we were watching animals in a zoo. Next to the booth was a space for a commentator and spectators, who were few.

Kasparov had been radiant about playing on top of the world, the world being New York, and predicted a great breakthrough for chess in America.

Smoking a cigarette was an adventure. With my Dutch colleague Gert Ligterink and Yvette Nagel, Yasser Seirawan's wife, I used to go down 106 floors to the Plaza, where we met fellow-outcasts. Once, when the Dutch group had come up again, I overheard the American grandmaster Michael Rohde, whose wife Sophia was chief of the press room, saying about our smoking squad: 'With smoking they're incredibly backward in Europe.' A rebuttal came to my mind: We may be backward, Rohde, but we live longer than you Americans and I think a lot more pleasantly. But I kept silent, as I thought that he wouldn't believe me.

In the press room Gert Ligterink met the American journalist Ivan Solotaroff, who by the way briefly appears in Philip Roth's novel *Operation Shylock*. They had met before in Sveti Stefan, where Fischer and Spassky had played the first part of their match in 1992.

Solotaroff told Gert a sad American smoker's story. As his wife had become pregnant recently, she had forbidden him to smoke inside their apartment, so he had done it outside, in a communal hall. Then fellow tenants complained that the smoke crept under their doors. As a last resort Solotaroff had taken refuge to an outdoor fire escape staircase to smoke, but then the landlord had forbidden that also. Then he had decided to give up the struggle and quit smoking.

But he found out that in the meantime a petition had been circulated in his apartment building, signed by many tenants, with a request to the landlord to evict the filthy smoker. This had made him so nervous that he had taken up smoking again and now he was at the end of his tether.

I left New York on an afternoon flight, which meant that I would arrive in Amsterdam the next morning. During the night most passengers were asleep, but as I can't sleep on a plane, I frequented the cabin of the air hostesses for drinks.

A bond is forged, I imagined, when you're awake while everybody else is asleep. Back in my seat, craving a cigarette, I fantasized that I would catch one of these girls while she was smoking secretly herself, and then, afraid to lose her job if I would divulge her terrible secret by crying out loud and waking the passengers, she would do anything for me, just anything.

A ghastly picture

Last year I saw a shocking photo in the German magazine *Schach*, taken

at the Kings tournament in Bucharest, where Ivanchuk, Topalov, Caruana and Nisipeanu were playing a double round-robin. The venue was the Amphitheatre of the National Institute of Statistics, which was said to be near to the Romanian Parliament.

On the photo you saw the players on stage, you saw the big computer screens and the spectator's area, with hundreds of chairs. This area was completely empty, not a soul in sight. Where were the Romanian chess lovers? They were probably following the games on the Internet.

At about the same time I saw another photo taken on November 17th at the Polgar Chess Day in Budapest. There you saw a man hanging from the ceiling, head down, playing a blitz game against Susan Polgar. It was the Hungarian Houdini David Merlini, who had just escaped from his chains. On that photo you saw masses of spectators, and I read that there had been 4,000 of them during that day.

Is this the future of chess, empty halls for top chess and big crowds for a chess-playing escape artist? In a previous issue I mentioned an interview with Andrew Paulson, who had said that the minimal live attendance to the fabulous London Candidates' tournament had been exactly as he had wanted it. Internet following was the thing and attendance in the flesh hardly counted.

Splendid venues

Playing in the Soviet Union was never easy, because there the men were separated from the boys and I was always among the boys. But I liked the big theatres where we played on the stage in front of an enthusiastic and knowledgeable audience.

When as a young boy I read about a tournament 'on the Semmering', in Austria, I imagined a wonderful scene with chess masters sitting in the snow on top of a mountain, almost falling off, and later I was a bit disappointed when I learned that these tournaments in Semmering were actually played in the comfortable Grand Hotel Panhans and not in the snow, and without any danger of falling off a mountain.

NEW IN CHESS

The 2009 San Sebastian tournament was held in the splendid Casino where in 1911 Capablanca made his sensational European debut.

I was fascinated by the great casino tournaments of old, in San Sebastian, Ostend, Baden-Baden and Monte Carlo, and still, whenever on the #1 boat through the Grand Canal of Venice I pass the splendid Palazzo Vendramin Calergi, I am a bit envious of my compatriot Hein Donner, not only because he won a tournament ahead of Tigran Petrosian in 1967, but because he won it there, at the Venice casino.

Japanese war cries

The most wonderful venue where I ever played chess was the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, world-famous for its fine orchestra and near-perfect acoustics. It was in 2001, at a performance of the sight-and-sound spectacle *Song Books* by the composer John Cage, as part of the annual Holland Festival.

It was a carnival with music, song and dance, wrestlers, bicycle riders, big screens with interviews with Cage, and also chess. The performance began with a chess clock set in motion, and then I started playing blitz against Misha Mengelberg, a chess aficionado and a famous jazz musician. Levon Aronian will know his name.

I had seen a video of John Cage's work *Reunion*, where he played chess against Marcel Duchamp and his wife Teeny. Cage drank wine, smoked, and now and then during the performance he stood up to stretch his legs and have some small talk with someone from the audience.

Can I do that too, I asked the producer of our performance at the Concertgebouw. Everything you want, in the spirit of John Cage, he said, and so ashtrays – I can't help it, there they are again – were set on our table on the stage of the Concertgebouw, and a fire extinguisher in case we inadvertently set one of the most famous concert halls in the world on fire.

After a while the chess journalist Max Pam asked if he could play the winner of our game and afterwards other chess players joined in, so that our corner of the venerable Concertgebouw was turned into a temporary annex of a chess café. I was left free to roam the hall, where I would have needed more eyes and ears than I had to follow what was going on.

From a balcony the ravishingly beautiful pianist Tomoko Mukaiyama shouted what I took for Japanese war cries through a horn and later in even more ravishing half-nakedness she plucked the strings of her piano violently, and if they had snapped, it would also have been in the spirit of the Taoist John Cage. A great evening and who would care for Internet hits? ■

Jon Ludvig Hammer

CURRENT ELO: 2608
DATE OF BIRTH: June 2, 1990
PLACE OF BIRTH: Bergen, Norway
PLACE OF RESIDENCE: Oslo, Norway

What is your favourite colour?
Dark blue.

What food makes you happy?
I enjoy home-cooked meals, since then I know I'm getting it exactly how I like it. Oh, and raspberries, strawberries and chocolate of course!

And what drink?
Cold water. If celebrating: a smoothie or a milkshake.

Who is your favourite author?
I have always loved crime novels. Thanks to his newfound super-fame, you might have heard of him: Jo Nesbø. He's also a fantastic musician!

What is your favourite movie?
At the moment it's *Easy A*. It's brilliant. But anything with spies, action, political drama is usually a hit with me.

What is your favourite TV series?
The West Wing, *The Mentalist*, *White Collar*, *Castle* ... Far too tough a question for only one answer!

Do you have a favourite actor?
Matt Damon.

And a favourite actress?
Emma Stone.

What music do you like to listen to?
Everything from Robbie Williams to Pixie Lott to Dire Straits to Coldplay to Eminem.

What was your best result ever?
I got a silver medal on first board at the European Team Championship in 2009. That was an amazing feeling.

Who is your favourite chess player of all time?
Magnus is. Because he dominates so seemingly effortlessly.

Is there a chess book that had a profound influence on you?
I always liked Jonathan Rowson's *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins*.

What was the most exciting chess game you ever saw?
Excitement also reflects the stakes of a game. Recently I think Carlsen-Svidler, London Candidates', was special. Everything was on the line.

What is the best chess country in the world?
Russia.

Do chess players have typical shortcomings?
Absentmindedness.

What is it that you appreciate most in a person?
Playfulness.

Do you have any superstitions concerning chess?
If I won my last game, I'll always use the same pen for the next game.

Who or what would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
Someone who is passionate about what they do, and has power to influence and improve other people's lives. Like a government minister.

What is the best piece of advice you were ever given?
A solid cliché: The only person your results have to satisfy is yourself. If you know you gave it all you had, you've done all you can.

Is there something you'd love to learn?
To play the piano.

Where is your favourite place in the world?
Kauai, Hawaii.

What is your greatest fear?
Failing.

What would you save from your house if it got on fire?
Like most other chess players, I'd try to get my computer – and maybe wake some family members to warn them!

How do you relax?
I watch tons of TV-series.

If you could change one thing in the chess world, what would it be?
Something about FIDE – but unfortunately there's no easy fix. I was happy to see Andrew Paulson involved, because he seemed to understand what type of rethinking was needed. Chess players can be too attached to the game to see the changes that need to be made. As we saw in Norway Chess, non-chess organizers can put on a fantastic show.

What is the stupidest rule in chess?
The draw offer.

Is a knowledge of chess useful in everyday life?
Not really – but it's nice that non-chess players assume we're really smart.

move by move goes from strength to strength

By continually challenging the reader to answer probing questions throughout the book, the move by move format greatly encourages the learning and practising of vital skills just as much as the traditional assimilation of opening knowledge.

also publishing in 2013:

ebooks are available from **EVERYMANCHESS.COM**
through our Chess Viewer app for iOS and Android
www.newinchess.com and other specialist chess retailers

ICC *Team Play*

» Create your own chess team and start playing team matches online.

» Great for Chess Clubs, Coaches, Schools, Universities and more!

Best of all it's FREE to ICC members!

www.chessclub.com/teamplay

Join ICC and use the Coupon: **teamplay**
Get **10% off** *any membership plan!*

ICC
Internet Chess Club
www.chessclub.com

Where the GrandMasters play!